

*«Black metal to me is paganism, and paganism is neo-Fascism, and neo-Fascism is anti-Christian, and anti-Christianity is black metal. It is a circle that cannot be altered, for everything fits in perfectly»*

**[Grand Belial's Key, USA]**

*«Black metal is the perfect soundtrack to all out war, yet it is the perfect symphony of the powers of nature. Cold and brutal as a northern wood in the dead of winter, yet bold and proud like an eagle soaring to the bright sun... NSBM is the sound of the Aryan spirit at war. The world has been warned»*

**[Grom, USA]**

*«Their "views" have nothing in common with black metal at all. The so-called black metal scene has made an inexcusable mistake, having allowed sheepy "National Socialism" to be also named black metal»*

**[Lucifugum, Ucraina]**

Towards the end of the nineties, black metal – by then one of the most feared musical genres ever, that had already made a name for itself thanks to a bloody streak of homicides and various acts of arson and violence – merged its sonic belligerence with National Socialist beliefs and the ideology of white power groups, breeding a new counterculture that's incendiary and ferocious like no other. A formula of intransigent extremism like never before in contemporary music, a world where this mixture of aural excess and loyalty to the "mythos of the blood" gave birth to hundreds of new bands and gathered thousands of disciples from all over the globe: Russia, United States, Germany, France, Poland, Australia, Italy, Scandinavia and even South America.

From the defining fathers of the genre (Absurd, Graveland, Der Stürmer, Spear of Longinus) to its more unknown and dangerous representatives, Wolves Among Sheep delves deep into this black abyss to bring forth the history and development of NSBM – National Socialist Black Metal, an underground phenomenon that transcended music to become a doctrine in its own right, a nefarious call to arms for those dissident youths who declared war to society as we know it.





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DAVIDE MASPERO - MAX RIBARIC

# Wolves among Sheep

HISTORY AND IDEOLOGY OF NATIONAL SOCIALIST BLACK METAL

**tsunami**  
edizioni





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**"I'm sending you out like sheep among wolves"**

MATTHEW (10:16)

**"National Socialism: the way of the wolf amongst the sheep"**

FROM THE THIRD ISSUE OF THE NSBM ZINE WALLACHIAN TYRANT

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# foreword to the English edition

**F**rom the very start, black metal has exalted the grim and the grotesque. The first black metal wave crested in Scandinavia, amid the world's most progressive social democracies; accordingly, the early black metal bands advocated a dystopian anti-world of illiberal thoughts and antisocial belligerence. In an odd juxtaposition with their ghoulish outward appearance and outlandish behavior, they made utterances that were ultra-conservative, totalitarian - even downright medieval. While these inflammatory statements contributed to the genre's growing infamy, they rarely reflected a coherent political ideology. Left-wing watchdog groups were quick to sound the alarm and bark "Nazi!" at these uncouth characters, but in most cases the term served as little more than a hollow buzzword.

Once the musical parameters of black metal were in place, the style itself became a dark chalice into which any number of more restrictive - or more extreme - ideas could be poured. By the mid-1990s competing subgenres arose, which even included a Christian variant of "holy unblack metal". The thorniest outgrowth, however, is undoubtedly that of National Socialist Black Metal (NSBM), and Max Ribaric and Davide Maspero chart these developments in dizzying detail in the present weighty tome.

Compiling a book that deals with polarizing topics, yet which avoids providing the reader with easy answers or readymade interpretations, means to walk a precarious tight-rope. Such was certainly the case with *Lords of Chaos*, the 1998 investigation of black metal that I co-wrote with Didrik Söderlind. The book became immensely popular, but we were also accused of harboring all sorts of nefarious agendas. To black metal fans mainly into the music, we were crime-obsessed; to the doctrinaire leftists, we were crypto-Fascists; to Christian fundamentalists, we were advocates for satanic mayhem; and to Varg Vikernes and his followers, we were Jewish lackeys out to make the Aryans look bad.

*Wolves Among Sheep* may elicit a similarly divided reception, for the authors allow the social antagonists who fill its pages to speak without censure. Ribaric and Maspero leave no stone unturned as they recount NSBM's bloody birth pangs, hyper-malignant growth, and surprising resiliency. They take a morbid curiosity in dissecting the still-living beast of NSBM and searching out its countless tentacles. If you are looking for moral condemnation of the subject matter, however, you'll need to bring that to the operating theater yourself. Christians will be revolted by the Satanism and paganism. Pagans will resent the misuse of ancient symbolism and the implication that it shares some innate connection with Nazism. Liberals will be appalled that such a genre exists at all (they'll sleep better

if they simply stick the book back on the shelf, unread). Conservatives will be repelled by the tactless - and frequently tacky - glorification of the Third Reich. To a doctrinaire National Socialist, the bulk of NSBM will look and sound like a new form of *entartete Kunst* (although many of these bands seem to imagine otherwise, it is safe to say that NSBM will not be hitting the stage at a real Nuremberg rally any time soon).

A remarkable amount of time and research went into *Wolves Among Sheep*, and the end result is neither a condemnatory exposé nor an apologia by genre-insiders. The scope of the authors' expertise ranges well beyond the walls of NSBM's shadow fortresses, and they bring a wealth of erudition to their project. This allows them to paint a broad, lurid, and often startling picture. Just as importantly, they draw comparisons with rival and antithetical currents - such as Red & Anarchist black metal, or the more popularly accessible Cascadian black metal - that have since become subgenres in their own right.

Although the spread of this music will be likened to a contagion, there is a more frightening realization to be had here: as a fanatical, violent, and often self-destructive subculture, NSBM is hardly unique. Moreover, its excesses are largely a byproduct of the same civilization it caustically indicts. Ultimately, NSBM represents yet another fissure in an increasingly fragmented, ferocious, and godforsaken world.

Michael Moynihan



# Foreword

## from the authors

**W**hen we started writing this book, we soon discovered that discussing NSBM is no easy task. This was not because of its often brutal and controversial nature, but rather due to the numerous inaccuracies and rumours that have been perpetuated about the genre. The abused definition of National Socialist Black Metal encompasses everything and its opposite, making it difficult to even know where to begin a dissertation on the subject.

NSBM is a musical genre that has no official recognition. Even the genesis of the label itself is obscure, as NSBM was only first mentioned in the late Nineties, after a few particularly radical groups - in an attempt to liberate themselves from the fringe of black metal which was becoming increasingly popular - had created numerous labels such as Nazi Occult Metal, Black National Socialist Metal<sup>1</sup> and so forth. This was the first indication of an ongoing shift. Over time, an NSBM vanguard coalesced and expanded in size, but it existed in the background and operated through alternative channels. It is a subgenre which is kept quiet; it is ignored by the printed media, if not blatantly attacked. It represents a border beyond which lies a no man's land; the bands that decide to cross it know that they are in for a lack of artistic recognition, and will be subject to diktats, denunciations, and ostracism. NSBM is met with harsh opposition, which is applied with more or less ferocious persistence depending upon the country in question. Publishers, distributors and promoters are compelled to comply with current laws in order to avoid substantial fines.

Generally speaking, the rise of NSBM sanctioned the need for an all-round instinct of self-regulation, which had never been so strong. Metal music - from its inception, a rebellious sub-culture allergic to restrictions - morphed into a complex and structured machine which, having reached a considerable size, integrated itself in a social and economic domain that abides by precise rules. In this phenomenon of standardization, aesthetic, verbal and auditory extremisms are tolerated as long as they remain within the arbitrary threshold of the morally acceptable. Obviously, glorifying National Socialism is not considered acceptable.

Therefore, there is an open feud between the metal scene - in its entirety - and NSBM with its intolerant attitude. This confrontation has become more and more radical and has led the extremists to take a defensive stance. After years of being boycotted, NSBM representatives, do not trust the official channels; generally speaking, they do not trust anyone without proper credentials within their own scene. On the other hand,

## FOREWORD

record labels and established publishers refuse anything that even remotely approaches uncomfortable topics. As a consequence, there is a subtle paranoia that animates both sides and works as a deterrent to any kind of interaction. As if the impenetrability of the genre was not enough, there was another obstacle we had to face while working on this book: suspicion. Many of the NSBM representatives we contacted refused to cooperate, although whenever this reluctance was overcome, we found helpful and open-minded people.

As you can imagine, the scene as a whole does not like to be fully exposed: but there are several "grey areas" where many bands dwell, using symbols and images as they please, and in some instances playing with an ambiguity colored by a political stance or a mere aesthetical taste. After all, provocation has always played a role within music, and NSBM is no exception. Because of this and due to the subtlety of the subject matter, we have meticulously researched our sources, and where possible we have quoted entire passages of interviews in order to avoid taking things out of context or misinterpreting them: this necessary caution in attributing a phrase or an ideological stance clears all gossip or urban legends that originate, thrive and spread through the Internet.

Along our journey we have used, whenever possible, both the statements of parties involved and people in the know, and most of all, we have used the priceless historical and photographic heritage that silently lies within hundred of fanzines published during the past years. As an obvious consequence of what has been said thus far, a genre that is shunned by the most popular publications can reach its followers only thanks to the work of countless enthusiasts, who have given a platform to the most influential representatives of the movement through the years. Defying political correctness, more or less biased amateur magazines have nourished an essential underground publishing business with the purpose to promote a subgenre that would have otherwise only existed in closed and "elitist" circles, hardly venturing beyond its own geographical borders. However, there is one more factor that makes it necessary to resort to the independent press: like any other genre, but in this case even more so, NSBM suffers from a particularly fast generational turnover. Many bands have gone through accelerated life cycles and have vanished leaving behind a cult status but little substance, and traces can only be found in decrepit, photocopied publications. In other instances, the extremism that was flaunted in the early years was put into perspective later on, ending up on radical but less provocative stances. Through the years, many prominent names within the scene have adjusted their aim, changing or updating their ideological framework: in some instances they have completely disavowed their past, while in other cases they have taken their beliefs to the extreme. In this sense, fanzines can operate as a "timeline", narrating the developments of those realities that often took a very interesting path of mutation.

Once we understood that the research would not be easy, and we chose the most suitable instruments to carry it on, we had to face other questions: what is NSBM, and according to which criteria is a band labelled as such? The answer is not that obvious,

because this sub-genre has its roots - as the name clearly suggests - within "Black Metal" *tout court* (and its ramifications), and does not possess a unique stylistic character. It is therefore impossible to discern exclusively which bands play NSBM based solely on their sound. One is then forced to resort to the other half of the definition, to determine if "National Socialist" represents the philosophical core of a given band. This is an aspect which, if taken literally, is actually even too stringent, inaccurate and often limiting. With the aid of the printed media and a certain underlying radical ideology of the fans themselves, various bands of different lineage and ideas have fallen under the NSBM definition, although they were not entirely unrelated to it. The connection to Nazism is just the tip of the iceberg, and in some cases it is even transient. It is the ground zero of an ensemble of values and ideals declined according to territorial needs: anti-Christianity, nationalism, defence of the race and its own traditions - often pagan traditions as opposed to the Judeo-Christian ones, which are seen as an intrusion of the Jewish power to promote a weak and passive religion/spirituality. NSBM has thus become something even more incomprehensible, which can encompass all those anti-Semitic urges that belong to one and the same ideology. This expanded interpretation of the genre, although erroneous, is the most popular and most often employed. And this is where we decided to start: from the way NSBM is perceived from the outside, in order to try and explain it through its peculiar aspects.

If we take official journalism at face value, there is an almost indistinct throng of bands devoted to the "thousand-year Reich" which extends with no continuity from the black metal scene to sub-genres like pagan, Viking, folk and so on. This oversimplistic type of categorization is based on iconography, symbols and aesthetics and serves to create an extremely inflated perception of the phenomenon. It should also be underlined that NSBM often becomes a label that is symbiotically stuck on bands: if a compilation album contains an openly Right-wing project, all the other participants risk being labelled as sympathizers. Needless to say that this sort of ill-advised media coverage has done nothing but attract numerous followers to the National Socialist banner, if only to experience the sense of rebellion that other forms of extreme music offered before they became popular. But there is more: rejected by their natural environment, many bands have built bridges across other territories, securing alliances with the skinhead circles, thus contaminating, on an artistic level, an environment that previously demonstrated reluctance towards metal in all its forms. Hence the development of further ramifications and the final awareness that, more than a National Socialist black metal movement, there is an actual metal circle with an NS undertone, with the subject matter serving as a binding agent for a number of diverse styles. Given the difficulty in delineating the phenomenon, this book makes no claim of being complete or encyclopedic.

Our ultimate intent was to delve into a fragmented scene, in order to find out who the bands were that first revved up the engines of this sonic panzer. At the same time, the work of such bands has provided the starting point to deal with news stories and



local matters, and to analyze, as thoroughly as possible, the essential cultural background that propagated this phenomenon. Keeping in mind the the fact that NSBM is more than a mere music genre, the ideologies that are part of its name (and as a consequence, of its entire existence) are an integral part of a theoretical system, and they need to be understood and analyzed. They are far from secondary elements within a movement, their message is more than collateral and their power is merely conveyed by the music. It was nevertheless necessary to establish a limit, beyond which the will to research certain subjects is entrusted to the single reader: characters and ideas that are often referred to are far from obscure and have been carefully examined by third parties. Anyone who might want to delve further is encouraged to explore those other sources.

[illegible]

*A sample of the archive documentation used during the drafting of this book*



### Notes:

1 - The definition Nazi Occult Metal stems from the first demo by Australian combo Spear of Longinus (1995), who labeled in this manner their sulfurous mixture of black metal drenched in Nazi mysticism. Black National Socialist Metal was instead a definition used by Funeral, French forefathers of Kristallnacht, in an interview published in the first issue of the fanzine Hatemonger (1996): «*It's a fast and melodic black metal with National Socialist lyrics*».

The term NSBM made its first official appearance on the 1999 American compilation *The Night and the Fog - A Tribute to the National Socialist Black Metal Underground*.



Stimmer

# Soldiers of the Black Sun

## Introduction

*«I BELIEVE THAT THE HISTORIOGRAPHY ON THE "ABSOLUTE EVIL" HAS INVOLUNTARILY TURNED INTO A CONTRIBUTION TO MYTHOLOGY. THEREFORE (AMONG REFERENCES TO THE HOLY GRAIL AND THE AVATAR OF HINDUISM, BLACK MAGIC CEREMONIES, FICTIONAL HISTORICAL NOVELS BASED ON "WHAT IF HITLER HAD WON"), THE "ABSOLUTE EVIL" OF NAZISM TURNS INTO A SORT OF FASCINATING HORROR. WITH THE RESULT THAT THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS MIGHT END UP SEEING IN THE FÜHRER THE "ULTIMATE REBEL", LUCIFER WHO CHALLENGES THE GOD OF CULTURAL UNIFORMITY AND MINDLESS CONSUMERISM»<sup>1</sup>*

[GIORGIO GALLI]

**B**asically, two keywords are enough to describe and narrow down the musical phenomenon that extreme metal fans know as National Socialist Black Metal. Those two words are *controversial* and *contradictory* and, although they are abused, we shall see why their use is not accidental.

After the Second World War, many forms of youth rebellion found release through certain sounds and collective rituals, which were often considered despicable in the social context of their time. Starting with Elvis Presley's pelvic moves, which nourished the sexual nightmares of several congregations, the conservative population has never forgiven rock music for that subversive impulse which fuelled the youth revolts that took place during the twentieth century. During the hedonistic Eighties, "satanic" hard rock and heavy metal (in all their declinations) brought old and new crusaders back under the banner of disgust and disapproval for the rise of yet another form of "unauthorized revolt" among the kids of their respective communities. As expected, with time the conflict – which was often of a generational nature – never soothed or lessened and, if anything, it became harsher. The stronger the blame and the disapproval, the stronger the impulse towards new forms of uncompromising auditory, visual and conceptual extremisms.

Observing the situation from a distance, if not with a hint of cynicism, it is like witnessing the eternal struggle between a controlling father and a rebellious son, nowadays exasperated by the frenzy and consumerism to which we are subjected. Each (alleged) provocation is followed by a period of incubation of this new evil, until it is neutralized within the marketing rules that decrease its subversive charge and, at the same time, turn it into another harmless pastime to be sold at a convenient price in order to grant each and everyone their illusory piece of rebellion – while all of these actions actually take

place within the unstoppable cogs of the system. Punk is a fine example, as well as other genres that sprung to life in an underground context: conveniently anesthetized, they found their way to the charts, magazines and television.

The imagery of classic metal in the Eighties, the ultimate soundtrack to those loose and carefree years, might put a smile on the face of those who, although they experienced it first-hand, are forced to admit the provocative and inevitably post-adolescent nature of many bands of that decade. In those years, we clearly find this reaction to the levelling power of a falsely prudish society that actually yearns and is hungry for strong emotions, where this sort of desire for the extreme takes shape. We witness a final, strenuous attempt at escaping the logic of consumerism: the act of becoming unpleasant in order not to be assimilated.

Unsatisfied with the occult fantasies of the Seventies, these new generations, charged with anger and juvenile impetuosity decided to push the accelerator in favor of sounds and themes that were decidedly more obscure, heavy, and oppressive. The evolution of the species takes us to syncopated thrash metal progressions, immediately followed by the brutal iconographic and musical violence of death metal, until we reach the exasperated and antisocial deviation of grind, which has long been considered an anti-genre, immune to the rules of the music industry. This early, sort of "intellectual", flirt with the satanic imagery paved the way for a downright advocacy of blood, flames and sulfur. The themes became more direct, explicit, and this new course was underlined by the cover artwork of the records themselves: the occult and gothic mood that ruled the Seventies gave way to grotesque and violent representations, and blatant blasphemy, the sign of an unstoppable process of barbarization that aimed at demolishing the common conception of what could actually be represented. Even more extreme, were the stylistic peculiarities: the rhythms became spasmodic, the voices became guttural growls. The music, at least in those times, was the most extreme that could be conceived with the aid of "traditional rock" instruments (guitar, bass and drums). The vinyl records literally dripped blood.

Yet, this represents only an intermediate stop along an endless path. The Nineties would take the offsprings of black metal to the altar, namely those of Scandinavian lineage, due to the incredible degree of media exposure which would serve to inspire imitators across the globe. The excesses of death metal, which too often turned into a nauseating commercial parody, became the unforgiving target of the uncompromising black metal followers. To them, death metal was just a mixture of childish provocations: hymns of fake blood and plastic entrails, recited by kids who wore torn jeans and sneakers. The genre of death metal represented nothing that could be taken seriously, considered believable, violently genuine, actually dangerous, or in one word: *pure*.

Black metal strove to reach a higher level as it attempted to climb not one, but at least three or four steps up the ladder of brutality and militancy, in the pursuit of a new and implacable Nordic hell. Those years were darker than black, occasionally illuminated by the arson of ancient churches scattered around Northern Europe, which proved to be too fragile to stop the fiery wave of the new disciples of musical extremism. Among acts of

vandalism, aggressions and homicides, this music would become the stormy soundtrack to the end of the millennium. In this case, blood was truly spilled: words and proclamations literally dripped from the records and were transformed into action. Some observers look at the situation with superficial detachment and use cheap sociology as leverage, to say that the bands and their fans simply lost control, and that a deviant sub-culture escaped the threads of society; and this perspective proves to be quite soothing and rational. For many others, it was the sign of a new era, signaling the time for an anti-Christian revival, lulled in the shadow of an obscure utopia.

These revolutionaries without a cause, were young people who could not wait to break the routine of a grey and ordinary life.

However, the faster the flames broke out, the quicker they burned out. The revolt dreamed of by the new barbarians would last for just one season: these few but intense years of success would ironically sanction the death of this new blackened, rebellious spirit. While it might have seemed impossible at first, even the apparently unacceptable excesses of this music genre would find a rewarding niche within the market as is often the case - trading true rebellion for a profitable approval. Facing fame, the recognition of a larger audience, along with tours, the press, and the major labels: the wheel started to spin faster for these bands, and they were easily sucked into the vortex of the music business. After all, they were just young musicians who suddenly found themselves in the spotlight. Satan soon went from being the undisputed guide to redemption to a mere shiny accessory; this cyclic law was applied to the unforgiving logic of the music industry. Of course, some bands were still true to the original idea, but once the initial momentum faded out, the big names found themselves at a crossroad: either evolve and leave the past behind or become a sterile parody of themselves, forced to play the part required by the masses. Subversion became escapism, and black metal was not scary anymore.

Towards the end of the Nineties, with the Devil and the unconditional support to put aside «*all the evil in man*»<sup>2</sup>, it was fair to wonder what the last barrier to break down would be. This was a legitimate question and the answer was anything but predictable.

Let us be clear: the music itself, although violent, dissonant and guttural had already been deconstructed and assimilated by the music business. In the year 2000, sonic brutality for its own sake did not impress anyone: and therefore, any controversial aspects must necessarily be found elsewhere. Anything that wished to stay genuinely *borderline* had no choice but to resort to a thematic and aesthetical arsenal. However, if not even the Devil and his followers could manage to shake the bastions of this materialistic and apathetic modern world, than what else could rise as a new adversary, and serve as a nemesis that could make the blood of a society that is immune to any kind of accusatory incitement boil? This is where the infamous acronym NSBM comes into play: where black metal is consecrated to the cult of Hitler, the *non plus ultra* of absolute evil, the ultima Thule of musical extremism. This torch was picked up, not by a lone band forgotten in a suburban rehearsal room, and not even by a few isolated voices in some nameless tundra, but rather by dozens - nowadays, hundreds - of bands, projects and initiatives that consciously



chose to gather under the crooked aegis of National Socialist metal. This is where the word *controversial* regains its full, outrageous meaning.

If we stick to NSBM exclusively, we have to face a reality that harbors within, the germs of a terminal evil. NSBM is more than a real music genre, and serves as a form of refusal. This phenomenon chose an eternal defence line, while enduring constant assaults from the media, and the general disapproval of society, along with the indelible stigma of being consciously associated to a devastating symbol like the swastika. Even though with time, the consumer strategists managed to absorb, more or less, any form of juvenile excess, it is quite difficult to believe that in the near future NSBM might turn into the next big thing within the metal scene. This is much too hard to swallow, as NSBM is inevitably destined to exist in the shadows, forcedly relegated to the fringes of the extreme music scene... an outcast among rejects, and therefore, the proud representative of the *true* underground movement. The genre is set firmly against any rule of the music industry, violently anti-Semitic, and consecrated with a suicidal impulse to a media sacrifice that is even incomprehensible to a large number of enthusiasts of the cruellest and most misanthropic black metal.

Now that we have established the excessively controversial nature of NSBM, we need to underline the totally *contradictory* aspect of it all. Because NSBM is and remains a contradiction in terms: it represents the radicalization of an ideology that saw the light during the past century, and is freely manipulated to suit a music movement. It would be enough to pick a handful of self-proclaimed NSBM bands to quickly realize that things do not come full circle. The crooked cauldron hides endless surprises: misanthropy, cheap politics and never-satisfied supremacist claims. The theoretical binding agent (which is often very superficial) that keeps this rusty but lethal auditory panzer together is just as varied: ranging from Hitler-inspired exoterism, to paganism, and historical revisionism, along with Jewish conspiracy theories, and oriental doctrines... nothing is missing.

The proto-Satanism of a few years back has been reshaped into a form of paganism, followed by almost random tributes to a new utopian Reich. In this grey magma, everyone tries to find an ideal niche, cultivating small hordes of followers electrified for the most varied reasons. It is useful to make clear some less than obvious facts: not all NSBM followers are "Nazi", and this label – as hard as it might be to believe – tends to be constrictive and limiting for a number of bands generally associated with this scene. In most cases, the typical NSBM consumer belongs to a pretty common category: a white male, generally between twenty and thirty years of age, that is a lover of extreme music. The reasons why he approaches NSBM lie, first and foremost, in an interest for the music and then a general fascination with its themes. In many cases, the pseudo-Nazi element is not even part of the actual characteristics that the listener demands, as he mainly wants a sort of barbaric black metal, with epic traits and loyalty to a stylistic approach that dates back to the birth of the genre. This attitude might seem incomprehensible or even unacceptable in other environments, but within black metal, where the average listener forged himself through continuous thematic provocations, it is not surprising. It is also

no wonder that the classic defense of the “moderate” NSBM enthusiast always starts with: «*I don't care if they are Nazi or not, I'm only interested in the quality of their music...*». This form of habitual indifference towards the ideological DNA of the bands has contributed to expanding a scene where, because of a lack of discriminants between what is acceptable and what is not, we find a rough juxtaposition of pentacles and runes, goats and swastikas, satanists and skinheads. This chaotic and confused anthology of signals, leaves even those who are most aware and conscious of their own “Hitler-inspired integrity” to be immediately associated with a bunch of hooligans slinging six strings. It does not matter, in the eyes of the profane, if they have spent years writing lyrics gathered from feverish nighttime readings of Miguel Serrano or Savitri Devi, if most of their comrades look like drunkards who can only stand up to pavlovian calls such as «*White power!*».

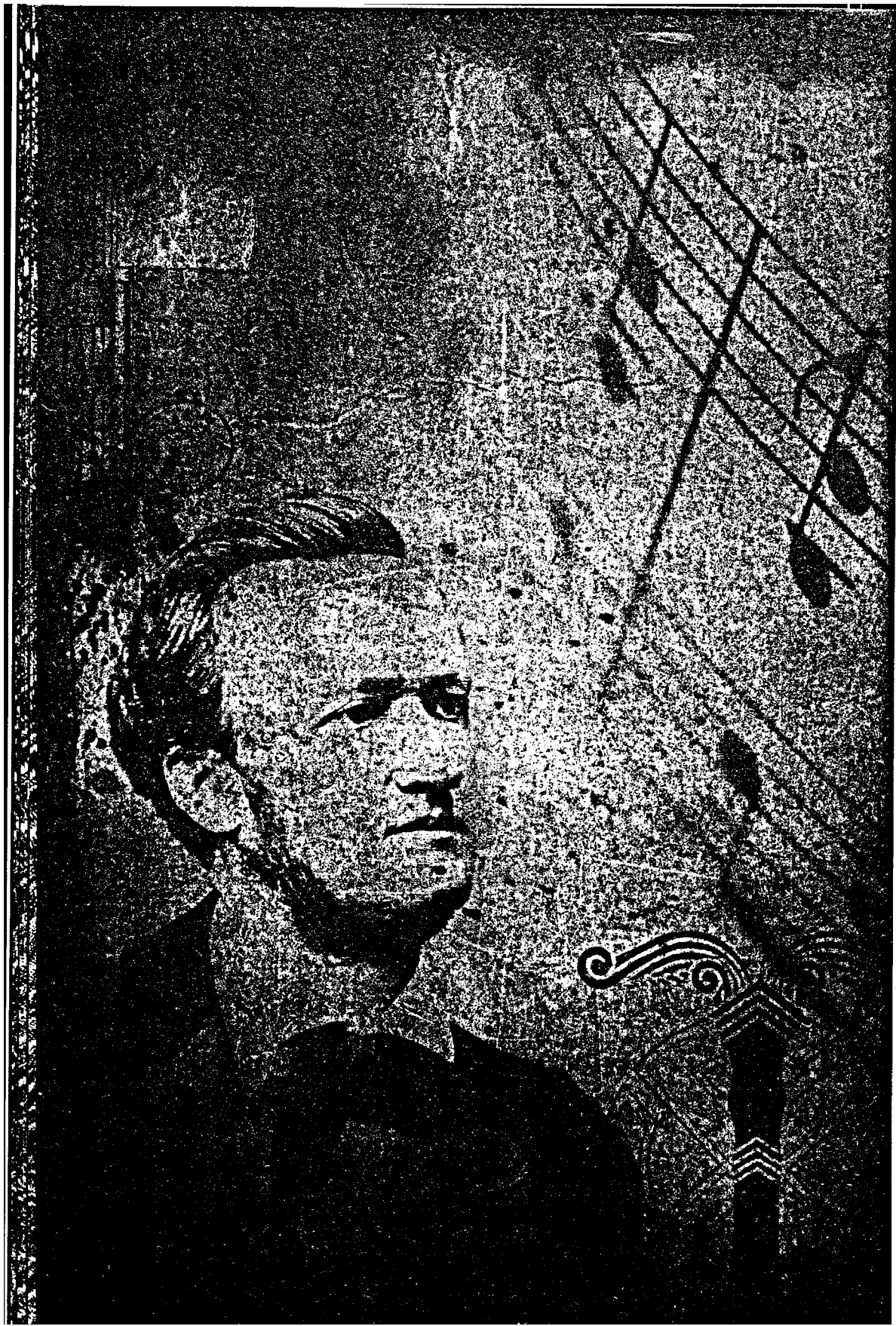
Their is plenty of subject matter and it torments more and more people, because this black tide becomes bigger every day, nourished by new affluents. Their numbers are obviously much smaller when compared to those of the mainstream metal market, both in terms of sales and distribution, as well as actual the availability of the products: but it is also true that we are dealing with a phenomenon that although irregular, is now consolidated, and is kept alive by constant generational turnover. The persistence and intransigence of NSBM and its followers are menacing. Those who believed in its imminent disappearance or extinction, due to the small number of listeners, and those who hoped it was just a sinister but juvenile trend destined to die out, have been forced to think again.

With a good fifteen years of history behind it, NSBM is alive and kicking. And its followers keep feeding an all-out war in the name of a “god” who killed himself among the flames and ruins of Berlin in A. D. 1945.

## Notes:

1 - G. Galli con P. A. Dossena, *Intervista sul nazismo magico*, Lindau, Torino 2010.

2 - As advertised back then with a slogan by the famous Norwegian black metal band Darkthrone (re: the album *Transilvanian Hunger* - 1994).



# Ideology in Music

## The long march from Wagner to black metal

«I CAN'T LISTEN TO THAT MUCH WAGNER. I START GETTING THE URGE TO CONQUER POLAND!»<sup>1</sup>

[WOODY ALLEN]

When NSBM first came under the spotlight, through sporadic lyrical and aesthetical expressions, and then as a global movement, the disillusioned metal community was bewildered and alarmed, faced with the devastating fury of this new black wave, given birth to by the most radical underground. However, upon reviewing events, there is clearly a complete inability, a lack of skills and “antibodies” to face the *political menace*: because if genres like punk, hardcore, grind and industrial were often vehicles – with different purposes, manners and timing – of promoting political and social ideas, metal had up until then, lived in a state of blissful carelessness, with rare exceptions that were duly stigmatized or aligned to a definite purpose to subvert common decency. Independent of its inspirations, whether they are a certain old-fashioned exoterism used as a purely aesthetic tool, or overused visual and moral clichés of gothic/fantasy literature, or imagery taken from b-movies and comic books, or the debauched trinity of *Sex, Drugs & Rock and Roll*, metal has almost always steered clear of current events, favouring an alternate and self-referential reality in opposition to the harsher and more solid one in which the restless punk generation, and then the hardcore scene, dwelled. And it is probably because of this “virginity” that the answer to the endemic threat of National Socialist metal turned out to be completely devoid of effectiveness, if not totally counter-productive. «*Metal has nothing to do with politics*» is the leit-motif that is repeated each time this troublesome pair becomes the object of discussion. Reality demonstrates that this is an anti-historical stance and an illusion; as music, in all its declinations, has always served as a means through which to divulge ideas, create consensus, sensitize people or incite crowds, playing a political role even without the cumbersome shadow of an ideological vessel. This also pertains to metal – obviously not in all its forms – regardless of the reluctance of those who would like to keep considering it a sort of idyllic Arcadia where the horrors of a decaying world are banned.

NSBM was not the first and will not be the last example of a music genre devoted to an ideology; what made it thorny and unbearable is its ability to congregate and organize itself, and follow a thought pattern. It has become a magnetic pole around which a vast progeny of followers have gathered, with the ability to build a functional superstructure

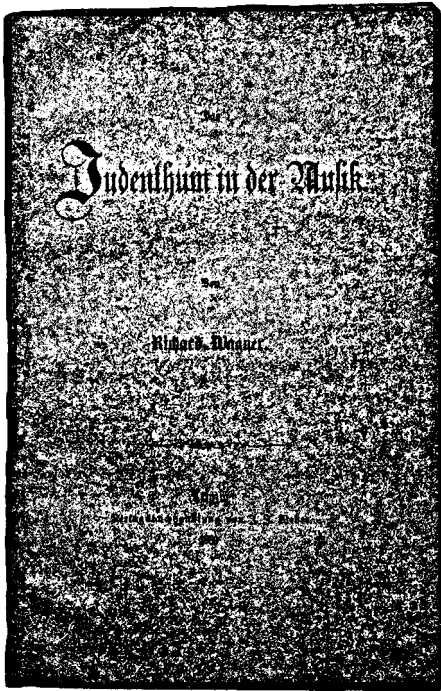
like no other within the extreme metal scene. In order to better contextualize this phenomenon and understand the roots of its background, it is necessary to take a step back and observe it from a vantage point that enables us to see the correlation between music and politics. A correlation which definitely did not first manifest itself within heavy metal music. For our scope of investigation, we need to pinpoint how, where and when the National Socialist – or generally speaking “Right-wing” – imagery, and then ideology, found its way into the system, being reawaken from the historical oblivion in which it had fallen, thus giving way to a wide-scale expansion which internalized various currents of radical thinking.

As we said, there is nothing new in affirming that music has always been an essential instrument of propaganda, able to strongly affect on an emotional level, and for this reason has been used high and wide throughout history. Some clear examples being military marches, national anthems and sacred music. Thanks to its ability to involve and excite the listener, putting them in a specific mood, music has found a role in the most diverse contexts, even the most frivolous, not the least being entertainment. Just think of how a movie sequence loses its bite when you remove the audio soundtrack emphasizing the most relevant moments. For example, the infamous scene of the bombing of the Vietcong village marked by Wagner's *The Ride of the Valkyries*, which can be seen in Francis Ford Coppola's masterpiece, *Apocalypse Now*. That this example comes to mind is not an accident: if we want to start from the very beginning, we might say that Wagner was a pioneer.

Wilhelm Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883) was not only one of the greatest and most influential composers in history, but is also a largely debated character with controversial ideas. His infamous essay, *Judaism in Music* is a highly inflammatory pamphlet, ferociously aggressive towards the Jewish influence in music. This piece and other writings helped to earn him the label of an anti-Semite. Adolf Hitler had always considered Wagner the perfect composer. Hitler loved him for his magniloquence and the totally absorbing intensity of his work, along with his ability to strike a deep chord and reach the subconscious. Therefore, it is no wonder that his music was often played during Nazi gatherings, and that works like the *Tetralogy*, based on the epic poem *The Song of the Nibelungs*, have entered the collective imagination bringing an inseparable association with the Third Reich. This correlation found its confirmation in the Führer's conclusion that: “Whoever wants to understand National Socialist Germany must know Wagner”. Although history has largely re-established him, the controversy surrounding the composer from Leipzig is still existent, and to this day, playing Wagner's works in certain contexts causes controversy and



German composer Richard Wagner



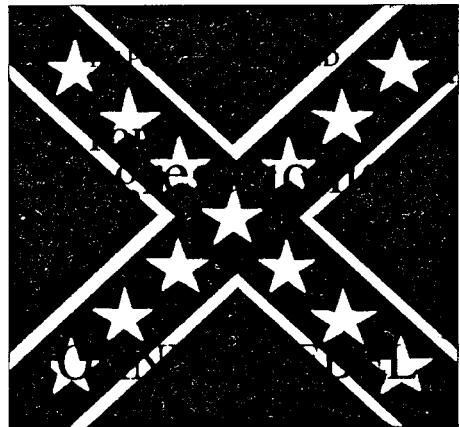
*The cover of the second edition of  
Das Judenthum in der Musik  
published in Leipzig in 1869*

discord<sup>2</sup>. In the history of the relationship between music and politics, this character represents an essential crossroad, although it would be risky to speak of his music as political and it definitely was not conceived as such by the composer. It is more a case of using it for political purposes, which is a very different matter.

If cultured music was enticed by certain ideologies, it is in so-called pop music that these ideologies found fertile ground, capitalizing on middle-lower class populism and historically unresolved questions. Symbolic, although of a more intense nature, is the work of Clifford Joseph Trahan, born in 1938 and better known under the pseudonym Johnny Rebel: a country musician from Louisiana who recorded a handful of songs – which then rose to cult status – during the second half of the Sixties, about one hundred years after the end of the American Civil War which abolished slavery and destroyed the economy of the Southern states. Those

were very different times, the former confederates were still speaking up and the Ku Klux Klan was raising its head again after years of disorientation. In this revival mood, Johnny Rebel started releasing his first country slivers, musically simple but lyrically corrosive: titles like *Cajun Ku Klux Klan*, *Who Likes A Nigger*, *Some Niggers Never Die* and *Nigger Hat in' Me* do not leave much to the imagination. The modest fortune he had back then – his singles could be found in the jukeboxes of the South – rose to a different height when, via various bootlegs, his songs intercepted the growing dissatisfaction of a very wide group which was used to a completely different sound, but still ready to widen its taste if the music was accompanied by a specific, radical message.

In America, the most relevant issues are related to immigration, the outcome of the Civil War and the struggle for civil rights brought forth by the black minority,



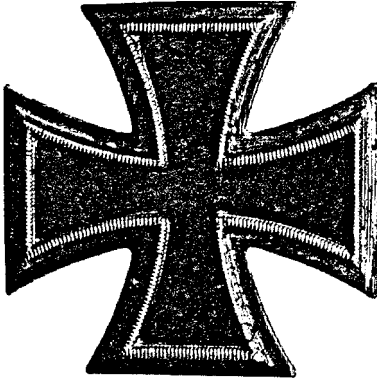
*For Segregationists Only (1994), compilation by  
Johnny Rebel released on Sunwheel Records*



as opposed to what happened in Europe, with the consequences of a totalitarian past. Johnny Rebel's racist country music belongs to a current that we might call segregationist, definitely derived from a different time and historical context. The theme of a complicated co-existence in a multiethnic society like that of the U.S. will become a recurrent theme in many American NSBM records, where the racial question is perceived as dominant, as opposed to the political/philosophical question, which is an advantage of the Old Continent and its eternal ideological conflict resulting from occurrences during the Nineteenth century.

If Johnny Rebel was the feeble voice of a reticent South that did not accept the big changes that were upsetting America, Europe was about to taste the fury of punk, which would have wiped away The Beatles' clean image, the intellectual and pompous prog rock, and the remains of the flower power culture, still filled with a pacifism that was no longer credible on the verge of the outburst of uncontrollable social tensions. The iconoclast fury with which the *no future* generation tried to subvert the strict impositions of Thatcher-era England manifested itself in the most varied ways: the Sex Pistols, the band that represented the whole phenomenon, slapped the idea of technical skills in the face and musically speaking, pulled a series of mediocre songs out of a hat, that were filled with a destabilizing charge that would leave a mark on the future generations, paving new ways that even metal music would follow. The concept of provocation took on new meanings. The violence of their shows, with the addition of self-mutilation and spitting, went hand in hand with the outrageous look, recurring to any device in order to shock the audience. The image of Sid Vicious walking around the Jewish ghetto in Paris wearing a t-shirt with a swastika on it, became the symbol of an era. Looking for real political connections would be crazy, but the impact was nonetheless explosive, a concentration of pure aesthetical terrorism that validated a concept that is still current: Nazism and its symbols represent a taboo, one of the last in a society that has grown accustomed to any impulse.

Back then, another band that would become fundamental to the development of metal music was taking its first steps: Motörhead. The singer and bass player, Ian "Lemmy" Kilmister, born in 1945, grew up with The Beatles and then explored the sidereal and expanded space with Hawkwind, before shaping the band that consecrated him to history. But what kind of relationship can there be between a band that plays rough rock'n'roll – with its roots firmly planted in punk and sprinkled with Jack Daniel's – and Nazism? With his passion for war memorabilia, through the years Lemmy became a real enthusiast and collector of original finds of the Nazi regime (part of his impressive collection is shown in the documentary *Lemmy*), and on various occasions he has performed live wearing an Iron Cross around his neck, a decoration used ever since the Kingdom of Prussia and then reintroduced by Hitler during Nazism – an effigy that also recurred in the English trio's merchandise. That was enough to cause a fuss, with accusations of political sympathies promptly (and repeatedly) dismissed by the one concerned with his characteristic aplomb. But from this point of view, the paradoxes are neverending, as is the case with KISS. Due to a mere graphic detail, this world famous band, which



*1939 Second Class Iron Cross, military decoration awarded during the Third Reich for courage shown in battle*

represents the most feisty and disengaged form of rock'n'roll, was forced to change its logo in order to avoid censorship issues: the two thunderbolt-shaped "S" resembling two Sieg runes caused insurmountable legal issues. Considering that Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons – founders of the band – are both of Jewish origins, it is easy to understand that it is not only a matter of eliminating potential ideological outbreaks, but also of obliterating and covering anything that, even by mere association, brings back to mind that tragic and bloody historical period<sup>3</sup>.

So far we have seen how in the punk/metal circles, the will to provoke has prevailed, paired with a rough fascination for certain themes; those matters were related to the aesthetics and have never – except for possible misunderstandings – encouraged real doubts regarding a possible "Nazi infiltration". Actually, for a long time metal has been between a rock and a hard place: accused of "Fascism" and "misogyny" by the progressive *intelligentsia* and marked as "degenerate" and "immoral" by the conservative Right, it seemed destined to being equally mistreated by both sides.

Something else entirely was happening in the early proto-metal circle. As a matter of fact, the Seventies were a time of sharp social discontent, of institutional crisis that led to the birth of extremist alliances that were able to profit from the common dissatisfaction, as it was happening in the United Kingdom, where the National Front, an extreme Right party, was quickly gaining solidarity. In this climate, and riding on the statements of unsuspected artists like Eric Clapton (who incited his audience to vote for Enoch Powell during a show, a conservative with a strong anti-immigration stance, in order to prevent England from becoming a black colony), the Rock Against Racism campaign was launched, with the purpose of gathering together the pop, punk and reggae scenes in a heartfelt appeal to discourage young people from taking xenophobic positions. The opposite side did not take long to strike back, and took the name RAC (Rock Against Communism): created to identify a simple series of gigs against RAR, the acronym later evolved in a real definition, applicable to the music genre that derived from it. In this smoldering social context, Ian Stuart Donaldson's (1957 – 1993) Skrewdriver took their first steps, a band destined to become a beacon for a small circle of groups with openly Right-wing lyrics. Donaldson was also the founder and guide – until his passing at the age of 36 – of Blood & Honour, the



*Symbol of the British extreme Right party National Front*

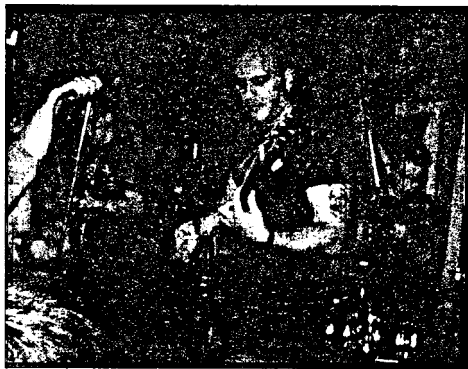


*Skrewdriver logo*

first real music promotion network focused on the white power scene; and Blood & Honour is also the name of a magazine edited by the organization with the purpose of «*promoting NS ideals, NS music, be it rock. Oi!, metal, etc.*»<sup>4</sup>. This is the first time that a reference to heavy metal appears in an explicitly Right-wing context: a sign that in those years, although confined within the movement founded by Donaldson, some pioneering musical experiments in the metal genre were taking shape that combined with a certain ideology.

The proliferation of the RAC/Oi! scene will be a fundamental phenomenon that will have a relevant role in the growth of the English neo-Nazi underworld first, and later worldwide, spawning numer-

ous other sections that will plant their roots in various European countries and the rest of the world. Here, music effectively becomes part of a more complex propaganda system, inheriting an interest for social themes that belongs to the more politically active punk movement, though opposing it according to a completely different, if not diametrically opposite, ideological point of view. Compositional skills cease to be a deciding factor and the quality of a band is defined based on the message, the lyrics and



*Skrewdriver on stage*

the activism within a rising, aggregating phenomenon which demands an extraordinary commitment of its members. An effective model that, as we shall see, will find an application even within metal, with the birth of the infamous Pagan Front.

As far as the gradual legitimization of a specific iconography and its related arguments goes, within the metal scene things started to get more serious with the radicalization of the music genres, in a parallelism that saw the lyrical aspect trying to keep up with

## Blood & Honour

*Symbol of the organization Blood & Honour  
founded by Donaldson*

the barbarization of the music. The Eighties witnessed the quick rise of thrash metal, and across the ocean the thriving music underworld launched itself in an unprecedented

violent fall: the sacred German triad formed by Kreator, Sodom and Destruction echoed Venom's corrosive blasphemy, and the vehement aggression arising from the American scene with Metallica, Anthrax, Megadeth and Slayer. Back in 1986, the latter released a milestone in extreme music, opening the gates to a sulphurous abyss that would have championed death and black metal. *Reign in Blood*, an unparalleled manifesto of musical

brutality, concentrates in just under thirty minutes, a subversive and nihilistic charge that was unimaginable until then; the fierce aural offensive that bursts out of the grooves is directly proportional to the verbal fury that impregnates the lyrics. The opening track in particular has traveled along an infinite trail of controversy, to the point of stigmatizing the name of the band in the following years with repeated accusations (regardless of numerous denials) of glorifying Nazism: the infamous *Angel of Death*. This track selects a disturbing perspective to deal with the exploits of Josef Mengele (1911 – 1979), a sadistic doctor of the Reich renamed the Angel of Death due to the genetic experiments that he conducted on prisoners of the concentration camps.



The band repeatedly denied any apologetic intent, stating that the violence they expressed was more akin to a direct consequence of the narrated events. But Slayer, probably intending to ride on the controversy – which could easily translate into promotion – continued to play with a certain imagery: just consider the famous eagle logo, clearly inspired by Nazi iconography, which was the evolution of the more minimal sword-pentacle with the band's logo used until the release of *Reign in Blood*.

In addition, their fan club is called Slaytanic Wehrmacht, clearly referencing the German army, its symbol, a skull wearing the characteristic helmet. Moreover, the album *Divine Intervention* contains the song *SS-3*, based on Reinhard Heydrich (1904 – 1942), a feared high ranking officer considered one of the architects of the final solution. Controversy also followed the release of the compilation *Undisputed Attitude*, where





*Insert of Indiscriminata Attack Two... (1988), second demo by Japanese band Rommel*

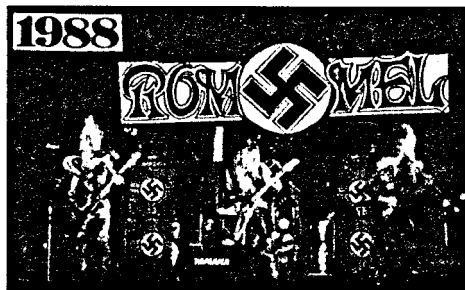
well. In the plethora of bands that filled the Japanese music market, some deliberately chose to adopt a moniker and an image related to the Nazi regime, on the basis of a *shock tactic* that has always proven effective when properly manipulated. Bands with names like Mein Kampf, Rommel and Rosenfeld must have stirred some curiosity. The improbable pairing between the exces-



*Rosenfeld promo picture*

the band reinterprets a series of punk hardcore classics: the song *Guilty of Being White* by Minor Threat was cryptically altered, turning the last line of the lyrics from «*guilty of being white*» to «*guilty of being right*», causing the disapproval of Minor Threat's leader Ian MacKaye, who already faced controversy when the song first came out. This whole corollary of improprieties captured the attention of an unusual audience, partially comprised of many openly extreme Right youngsters, who became regulars at the L.A. quartet's shows.

Slayer were among the first to up the ante, drawing on a pseudo-satanic background made of pentacles, black magic, and history, while repeatedly analyzing the deepest recesses of war. Since speed and thrash metal were a global phenomena, it did not take long for the genre to take root in the Far East as



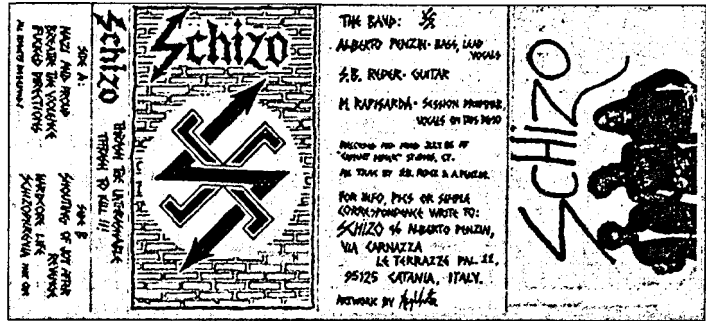
*Rommel on stage*

sive aesthetics of the Eighties – balanced between glam and cyberpunk – and the solemn iconography of the regime poses an obvious contrast, but this contrast helps nonetheless to legitimize, although unexpectedly, signs and symbols that are starting to reappear increasingly often in an ambiguous guise.

Even more controversial was the debut of the Sicilian combo Schizo who, with their excellent *Main Frame Collapse*, would later be considered among the most significant bands of the first wave of Italian thrash/black metal along with Necrodeath. Their first demo, *Thrash the Unthrashable - Thrash to*

*Kill!!!!* released in 1985, carries a stylized swastika on the cover and a song entitled *Nazi and Proud* opens the track-list. However, this was an isolated instance in their discography and it did not result in a political stance. So, this could be ascribed to the phenomenon of pseudo-Nazi exploitation which we have already mentioned, with the sole purpose to shock.

In that same year, on the other side of the Atlantic, *Speak English or Die* by S.O.D. (acronym of Stormtroopers of Death) kicked political correctness in the teeth: born as a side-project of



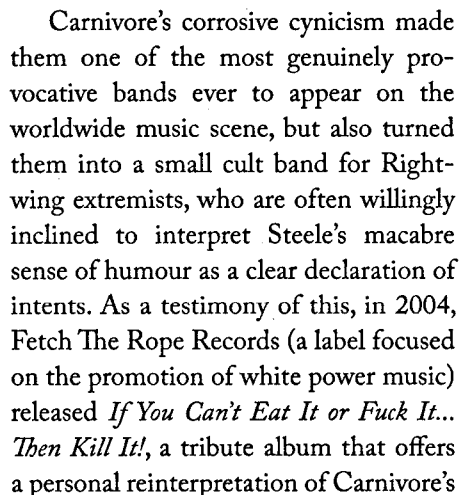
members of Anthrax, S.O.D. debuted with an explosive album, an earth-shaking crossover thrash that used provocation as a sharp weapon. A provocation that is notoriously not appreciated, especially by a puritanical America that had just seen the birth of the P.M.R.C. (Parents Music Resource Center), an association devoted to censorship, in order to monitor and possibly limit access to music that was considered offensive or violent, regardless of the First Amendment. W.A.S.P., Judas Priest, Black Sabbath and Venom were all attacked by this silly congregation of bigots who perfectly embodied the worst stereotype of American middle class. It is a safe bet that songs like *Kill Yourself*, *Pre-Menstrual Princess Blues* or *Pussy Whipped* by S.O.D. did not adhere to the strict Spanish Inquisition style parameters of these new censors. In the midst of references to such gratuitous violence, it was *Fuck the Middle East* that created the most problems and misunderstandings, and the word "Fascists" did not take long to pop up.

Also aligned with the coordinates of the politically incorrect, were Carnivore of the late Peter Steele (better known for his band Type O Negative), who became a cult band with just two albums: *Nazism* and *racial conflict*, misogyny and disdain, alcohol-



*Carnivore promo picture,  
Peter Steele's first band*

ism and blasphemy were the ingredients that the New York threesome dished out right from their self-titled debut. But it is with *Retaliation* that outrage reaches its zenith, repeatedly bursting with blasphemous lyricism. Songs like *Race War* and especially *Jesus Hitler* reside in a very cruel verbal territory, projecting crooked shadows on a profane underlayer that slays Christian dogma.



On the same war path, but with a chilling dose of madness amplifying CARNIVORE's ungodly humor, Seth Putnam was taking his steps, as he founded the outrageous combo Anal Cunt. With an obscene moniker like that, they built their career on being offensive, on insults and a nihilistic attitude that is rarely matched; perfectly elevated by Putnam's death on June 2011 due to a drug overdose. Over twenty years of activity witnessed the release of several albums, live records and demos, delivering a sick-sounding grind (far from Napalm Death or Agathocles' socially engaged interpretation, reminiscent of their Anarcho-punk origins), devoid of any hesitation and bursting with a series of excesses that would make anyone turn pale. No one is safe from Anal Cunt's iconoclast ferocity and there is no group that Putnam's indecent spirit does not attack: homosexuals, the terminally ill, followers of any religion; not forgetting his personal historical-political perspective. Although delirious,

- FETCH  
THE ROPE**  
  
**RECORDS**

[illegible]

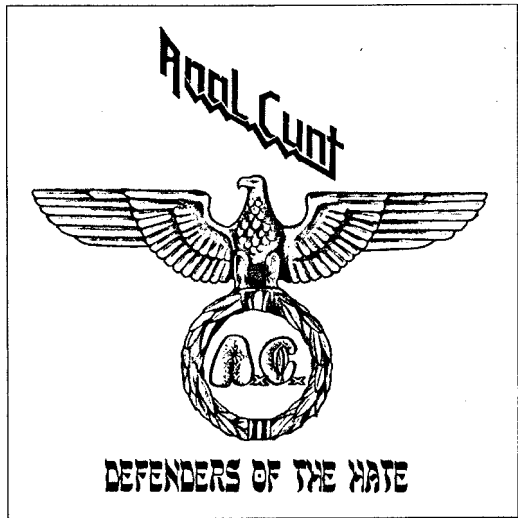
*Back cover of the Carnivore tribute released on Fetch the Rope Records, whose logo appears on the right (2004)*

songs like *Hitler Was a Sensitive Man, I Went Back in Time and Voted for Hitler, I'm Hitler, I Sent Concentration Camp Footage to America's Funniest Home Videos*, and *Ha Ha Holocaust* will inspire a more structured audio-visual "criminal conspiracy" with Putnam as the main character: this being the band Vaginal Jesus, whom we shall discuss later on.

Before the advent of black metal, death metal was largely considered the most extreme music form within the metal realm; the themes followed the unstoppable process of auditory exasperation started by thrash metal, shaped into a new form by Possessed's infamous *Seven Churches* and baptized by Death's *Scream Bloody Gore*. The

radicalization of the aesthetics and the upsetting violence of the lyrics were the phenomenon's trademark, and it inexorably went on until the inevitable saturation of the market. As with thrash metal before it, death metal became just another goldmine from which record labels started drawing with insatiable craving, quickly turning it into a mass phenomenon, digested by the music industry, a scarecrow used by the Bible Belt's<sup>5</sup> television preachers in order to bewilder anxious parents. The high tide soon withdrew, leaving us with a conspicuous amount of seminal bands, while dragging the rest into oblivion.

In a triumph of death and miasma, among forensic medicine manuals and horror movie quotes, death metal seems rather intolerant towards certain racist excesses; a first-hand discovery made by Florida deathsters Malevolent Creation, one of the great combos that survived the genre's implosion. *The Ten Commandments*, their debut album, is chiseled in granite with double bass drums and terrifying riffs, and the following albums brought the band to an enviable status and a special place in the death metal pantheon. But the foundations of this behemoth were shaken when their fourth opus, *Eternal*, saw the light, due to some lyrics that started a wave of controversy. The album contains the song *They Breed*, which hatefully attacks (and we quote) «*fucking niggers*», calling them «*scum*», «*lying thieves*» and «*filled with diseases*», wishing them a violent death. Back then, the band tried to minimize the whole thing, but more problems arose in a different shape, when during a show of their German tour, the singer/bass player Jason Blachowicz (who wrote the lyrics in question) had the great idea to show up on stage wearing a Ku Klux Klan shirt. The audience's reaction was explosive and the show turned into a heated protest against Malevolent Creation, as reported by guitarist Phil Fasciana<sup>6</sup>. After this



*The artwork of  
Defenders of the Hate  
(paraphrasing the Judas Priest album  
Defenders of the Faith)  
by Anal Cunt (2001)*



stunt, Blachowicz was kindly fired (although he re-joined the band in 2010) and the group, perhaps to clear all doubts, took a public stance against racism, joining the project Metalheads Against Racism.

Born as a loose collective desired by people gravitating around the metal scene, the purpose of this group is *«To keep the racist scum out of our scene, and to make it clear to the whole world that heavy metal is NOT racist, and we will NOT tolerate racism among us»*<sup>7</sup>. Those who endorse their manifesto accept three main stands:

- «1. We believe that all human beings are born equal.*
- 2. We believe that multiculturalism is neither unnatural nor dangerous.*
- 3. The metal scene is not open to those propagating the idea that some people are inferior to others because of their race or culture. We will not allow heavy metal to become a forum for their racist views»*<sup>8</sup>.

The paradox is that at times it looks like a sort of upside down blacklist, filled with bands that seem to be after a moral free pass that can be obtained with a simple signature and no actual anti-racist commitment, so they can grant themselves a respectable resumé. Putting aside the bands that chose to undersign the appeal, it is interesting to dig deeper into the reasons behind the birth of the project:

*«Common sense would tell you that it's not necessary for metalheads to declare themselves anti-racist. Heavy metal as an art form is about the love of freedom and has always been opposed to Fascist ideas. But in recent years, the scene has become more and more infiltrated by racists. It's absurd that an art form like metal should be used for the propagation of racist ideologies, but the fact is that it's happening right now, and we need to put an end to it. A clear line must be drawn between real metalheads and bigots who are only abusing metal to propagate their racist ideas»*<sup>9</sup>.



*Symbol of the AFA*

It is a clear example – the first but not the last – of how, at a certain point, the suspicion of a politicized division crept into the metal scene. This accusation no longer comes from people who do not belong to the music scene and are unfamiliar with the dynamics of the genre, but from fans or people otherwise involved in the scene who feel the urge to take a stand. The manifesto in itself confirms a change in the course of action. Crossing that boundary line, which became progressively thinner and divided provocation from propaganda, generated two antithetical factions: on one side are those



who are against this dangerous deviation, on the other, those who support or tolerate the use of new themes, although eccentric, in order to get rid of that halo of mannerism that seems to have carved its way into extreme music. As a matter of fact, going forward, the approach towards a particular music fringe – contained in the extreme genre – is focused

not only on the artistic proposal alone, but on a deep research of signals that would allow the identification of a possible political agenda. Telling art from propaganda is a subjective and transient thin line, and it becomes the new virtue of the music critics, as well as the objective of zealous organizations – which in truth are often generated by the Internet, and their purpose ends within those confines – that keep themselves busy searching the underground high and low. What comes out of it is a witchhunt that often feeds itself with groundless gossip and forces many groups to defend themselves from accusations of alleged political affiliations. Suspicions of crypto-Nazism involved Tiamat due to their beginnings (their first moniker was Treblinka, like the extermination camp), Bolth Thrower for their warlike imagery (which often comes from role-playing games and not the real world) and Hail of Bullets after their debut album *...Of Frost and War*, a concept on the Second World War which tells of the various phases of the conflict on the Eastern front. Even Impiety, a death/black metal band from Singapore, had to disentangle themselves from accusations of anti-Semitism because of the song *Carbonized* on their album *Paramount Evil* (2004), whose lyrics are based on the experiments of Mengele, the angel of death. In addition, the image they chose for the album cover definitely did not do them any good. It is even easier to stick the Nazi label onto those bands who take inspiration from paganism or Nordic mythology: Finland's Moonsorrow (for some the S in their logo, stylized like a rune, was enough to condemn them) and Faroe's Tyr are familiar with this issue: in 2008 they were both forced to release a statement to dispel all suspicions after two German organizations – the well-known AFA and BIFF



*The cover of  
Paramount Evil (2004)  
by Impiety*



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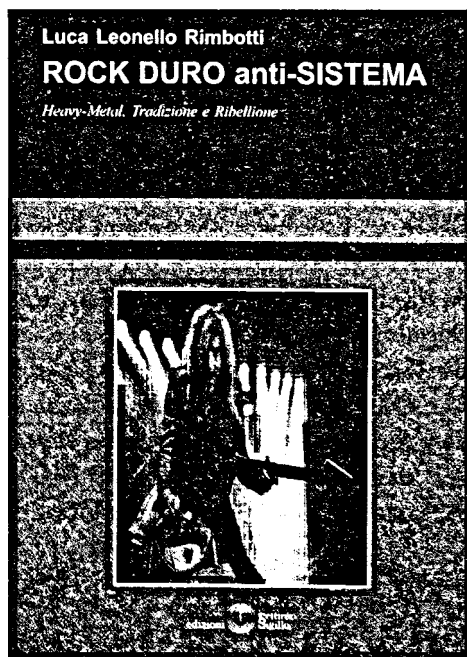
– had caused a fuss prior to the imminent transit of the Pagan Fest tour. It did not go any better for Latvia's Skyforger who, regardless of the statement "No nazi stuff here" which appeared on their first records, were attacked because of a stylized swastika that appeared in their logo, and they were thus forced to remove it to squash all controversies<sup>10</sup>. And the list could go on for pages and pages. Any statement, image, lyrical theme is analyzed not by ancient government censors, but by magazines, organizations, promoters, and activists who operate both inside and outside the music circuit. A hasty hint is enough to involve even the less suspicious bands in a machiavellian dispute that will most definitely damage them.



This was a brief digression on some relevant happenings and related excesses, which saw a convergence of music and Right-wing politics (or at least ideas and symbols related to it), a fiery union that has always stirred controversy and harsh debates, which is destined to repeat itself more often and with increasing boldness. The truth is that metal, in its entirety, strengthened by a thorough and global distribution, asserted itself as a subculture that has stood the test of time and the decline of fads. Due to its ability to adapt and redefine itself through new contaminations, both musical and conceptual, it became a solid and functional platform for anyone to express themselves. This includes those who decided to transfer into it all sorts of ideologies and this process has become difficult to reverse.

Some have gone even farther, offering a close examination of the genre as a whole based on the ideology, as explained in the book *Rock duro anti-sistema. Heavy metal, tradizione e ribellione* by Luca Leonello Rimbotti, published by Settimo Sigillo.

*«This music spreads ideas, dispositions, attitudes, symbolisms, ritualities, myths, and types that, although visually superficial and often marred by marketing tricks, are undeniably directed towards rescuing random but consistent shreds of European tradition. [...] The hero is revived in this powerful music, the saga and the myth, honour, loyalty and faith are claimed as well as mystery and the arcane realm of magic. Its role in contemporary society is the same as storytellers, skalds,*



The cover of the book *Rock duro anti-sistema* (2006) by Luca Leonello Rimbotti

*bards, the wise and the visionary shamans of our Tradition: they too tended to move emotions, not depress but promote moods and move hearts, to trigger the power of the myth of the spirit»<sup>11</sup>.*

Rimbotti is not looking for a specific political message in the work of this or that band, it is more like a reinterpretation of heavy metal (and partially of hard rock) in its entirety, not as a mere juvenile subculture, but as a real force that acts in opposition to the secularization of society, bringing back – in a modern form – elements that belong to a transcendental world and spirituality, that of Tradition (in an antimodern/Evola-inspired sense), which do not seem to find room to emerge anywhere else. In this sense metal, just like and more than any other music style, would be apt to gather the legacy of the great avantgardes (for example heavy metal as the celebration of speed that Futurists already cherished), at the same time reconnecting with forgotten symbolism: the live show is interpreted as a collective ritual, a modern version of a shamanic celebration; the frontman officiates the ritual in front of the ecstatic crowd, he is comparable to a charismatic political leader who is able to mesmerize the audience. Rimbotti quotes Hitler's famous speeches as a perfect example of this communion between the collective Ego and the individual. Thanks to the grandiose scenography, they managed to emotionally involve the audience, thus reaching *«A mystic union between the chief and the people»<sup>12</sup>*. An experience which, according to the author, is totally comparable to a metal show. Music that definitely possesses an aesthetical but also ethical value as soon as it turns into a philosophy of life, dictating every day actions according to a code based on honor, Tradition, heroism and camaraderie. It is revolutionary if compared to those models that modern society considers as winning, but conservative in its contents and even more in the artistic connotations. According to Rimbotti, metal possesses inner characteristics that are undeniable and placeable in a "Right-wing" context, regardless of the ideas of the musicians themselves. Therefore, extreme music is in antithesis to that of the so-called protesters (from Bob Dylan to Springsteen and U2) who promote conformed and anesthetized counter-cultures, the pillars of a system that feeds a worldwide business hiding behind libertarian, pluralist and pacifist values, while it only aspires to maintain the status quo. In this context metal music, in its multiple role of anti-bourgeois force and subverter of the order, finds its true essence:

*«Today extreme music serves as an escape point from all this hypocritical "holier than thou" trash: it is the sound of an ideological mutiny and a multifaceted encounter, which is transversal if compared to a social and cultural identity. Its highest role, beyond the artistic frontiers, is that of a catalyst of themes and attitudes, strong paths to an active existential concept that is able to escape the methods of acquiescence and socio-cultural narcotization. A kind of music for fighting, at least with few but strong tracks, whose anthropological background is not class-conscious nor exclusive, but it involves anyone who feels the inconvenience of having to doze off in order to please the entire world, in between the threads of a system*

*that only promotes the neglect of the Self. And in opposition to which it is viable to conceive some kind of revolt»<sup>13</sup>.*

In his thorough examination, the author also makes some big mistakes concerning the music scene (like labelling Mayhem as pagan based on the lyrics of *Pagan Fears*, or defining Burzum a death metal band), but they do not invalidate his theory, which does not depend on one band or the other. Rimbotti's thesis – embraceable or not – is definitely unique and out of the ordinary, and comes from a vision of heavy metal as a means to a forgotten knowledge (esotericism, alchemy, but also legendary sagas and popular myths), generally unpopular with the secular and materialistic contemporary society, which finds within metal new nourishment and the possibility to take root in the minds of new generations that have not been domesticated by the system.

If one can make a formal criticism of Rimbotti, it is that he approaches the theme from too wide a perspective, creating a musical macro set that includes Frank Zappa and Slipknot, Ronnie James Dio and Therion, very different entities both in terms of themes they deal with and the way they express them, in addition to their cultural background and their target audience. Therefore it is hard to imagine that – even involuntarily – they are all part of this great plot to rekindle the spirit of Tradition through music.

More than in Manowar and Judas Priest's classic metal, it is in the most extreme

genres that the awareness, although chaotic and violently instinctive, of the cultural instances we have mentioned so far merges with a strong urge to attack and subvert the system, through more than art.

Once the stereotypes of fantasy literature and the Grand Guignol-esque excesses of death metal are put aside, black metal comes along to stir the pot, with actions rather than dreams of a revolt, in fact *philosophizing with the hammer*.



## Notes:

- 1 - Woody Allen, from the movie *Manhattan Murder Mystery*, 1993.
- 2 - Israeli composer Daniel Barenboim is well aware of this, back in 2001 he caused shock and resentment when he directed *Tristan and Isolde* as a second encore to close the concert held at the Israel Festival in Jerusalem.
- 3 - On a minor scale, the same foresight was used by Death SS, historical Italian horror metal combo founded by Steve Sylvester in 1977 and devoted to a form of theatrical metal whose aesthetical aspect, mediated by horror cinema classics, merges with an interest towards themes like the occult, Satanism and Crowley's philosophy. In the early Nineties the, band briefly changed its moniker, releasing some albums under the name Sylvester's Death in order to once again avoid the unfortunate assonance of that double S.
- 4 - From a Skrewdriver biography, *Diamond in the Dust* (it can be found online at [www.skrewdriver.org](http://www.skrewdriver.org)).
- 5 - The "Bible Belt" is a cultural area of the United States, geographically placed in the South-Central East of the country, where there is still a strongly conservative model of society that observes the christian protestant religion.
- 6 - Malevolent Creation, *Malevolent Mass Murdering Maniacs*, from *Chronicles of Chaos* ([www.chroniclesof-chaos.com](http://www.chroniclesof-chaos.com)), November 1998.
- 7 - From the website *Metalheads Against Racism* ([www.metalheadsagainstracism.org](http://www.metalheadsagainstracism.org)).
- 8 - Ibid.
- 9 - Ibid.
- 10 - «To our people, the swastika (or as called here - thundercross) was a sign of the pagan god of thunder, and it gives protection against evil things. On the first two album sleeves we even included labels which read "No Nazi stuff here" to avoid misunderstanding, and prevent false interpretation of the symbol. The thundercross existed long before the NS regime of 1930s. Sadly, it seems that there is still prejudices against the symbol alive today; therefore Skyforger has removed the symbol from the logo permanently». From Skyforger's official website ([www.skyforger.lv](http://www.skyforger.lv)).
- 11 - L. L. Rimbotti, *Rock duro anti-sistema*, Settimo Sigillo, Roma 2006.
- 12 - Ibid.
- 13 - Ibid.



# Arisk Black Metal

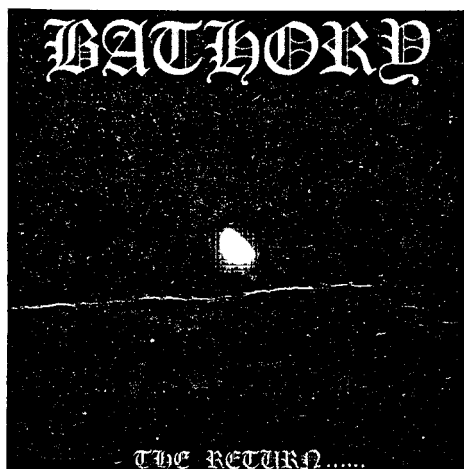
## Black metal between blood and soil

*«A MINORITY CAN NEVER HAVE ANY OTHER EFFECTIVE MEANS TO INFLUENCE THE COURSE OF MATTERS BUT THROUGH THE USE OF VIOLENCE»<sup>1</sup>*

[PENTTI LINKOLA]

**T**he essence of black metal, that which originated from the cold Norwegian lands and considers Mayhem as its prototype band<sup>2</sup>, was born as a disruptive phenomenon: an exasperation of thrash metal's eruptions along the pioneering paths opened by its undisputed forefathers: Venom, Sarcófago, Hellhammer, Bathory. This pure form of black metal changed many things, on various levels.

From a strictly musical point of view, it subverted the standards of metal, offering a bare and dissonant music with rough production, and the echo of a certain punk impetuosity steered towards dark shadows and filled with a cold and disarming feeling. Characterized in its basic form by the heavy use of circular riffs and tremolo picking to obtain the characteristic lo-fi sound, black metal creates a peculiar trait out of its harshness and minimalism. The almost total lack of bass, always relegated in the background, leaves space for a cold and massive wall of distorted guitars, sustained by pounding drums with a wide use of the double bass drum to create an earth-shattering soundscape. Compared to the guttural depth of death, black metal prefers the use of





a high-pitched and screaming vocal range which gives a dramatic tone to the songs, making them even more sinister, thanks to the rejection of all technical additions during the recording process.

The offspring of this apparently inconceivable alchemy, which will later be called necro-sound (but back then it was simply considered a mediocre recording), will become an essential element in defining a stylistic trend: no longer an accessory, but functional to the creation of atmospheres that seemed to come from beyond the boundaries of reality. *The Return...* (1985) and *Under the Sign of the Black Mark* (1987), Bathory's second and third album respectively, were the first true manifestos that summed up what we have just described.

From an aesthetical point of view, it represented a further step forward towards that process of radicalization that was already happening within the metal scene, stylizing an aesthetical code that would be universally recognizable. Black clothes, studs, inverted crosses and corpse paint<sup>3</sup> were part of a specific stage ritual that was light years from the cheeky attitude of death metal bands and a pathway to another dimension, as well as preparatory in strengthening the message expressed through the music and



*Mayhem*

lyrics. This was evident in not just the make-up, but also the album covers, the flyer and fanzine graphics: everything contributed to redefine the norms of a genre that was rewriting its own rules, distancing itself from what others had done before. The impact was earth-shaking, also due to the lack of news and the consequent myth generated by the remote land of origin, which up until then was

the unsuspecting cradle of a venomous destructive force. Nowadays, the first pictures of Euronymous, Emperor, Burzum and Darkthrone, the covers of those records or the tragic images of burning churches are actual symbols that can sum up through visuals alone the *Weltanschauung* that is the core of the movement, at least in its primordial form.

Ultimately, it carried on a revolution in terms of what it contained. This is undoubtedly the most discussed aspect, which took on a relevant weight if compared to any other branch of the hard 'n' heavy scene: black metal, although in a frantic and uneven way, with all the ingenuities and mitigating circumstances identifiable with a music genre created by a bunch of kids who were barely out of their teens, draws heavily and discontinuously on a historical, esoteric and philosophical baggage that is extremely powerful, such as Norse mythology, ancient history, European legends, ancestral



*Euronymous in a promo picture for Mayhem*

religions, Satanism and occultism. Most importantly, black metal is the first genre (of metal origin, as punk and similar genres always had a double aspect that transcended the music itself) that decides to bring into the real world all those verbal abuses that, up until that moment, were stuck in the grooves of a record, the declarations of an abstract revolution.

The chronology of the events is well-known. The epic tale of these new Scandinavian barbarians has been dissected, studied and catalogued in all its facets, but there is value to briefly retrace it, considering its primary importance and what came out of it.

It all began with Euronymous' (Øystein Aarseth) peculiar vision. He was the founder and

guitarist of Mayhem, as well as the theorist of the transitional process that made an unknown extreme metal band the gravitational center of the musical movement that would soon see the light. The release of the EP *Deathcrush*, which dates back to 1987, was the spark of a series of events that were destined to forever mark the national and international metal scene. The milieu was shaken by the intensity and ferociousness that oozed from songs like *Deathcrush* or *Pure Fucking Armageddon*, accompanied by an aesthetical research that did not go unnoticed:

the use of corpse paint in particular would become a fundamental trait for those who gathered around Mayhem. Before long, a small circle of followers materialized



*Darkthrone during their death metal period*

in Oslo, after bands like Darkthrone (who had previously released an excellent death metal-inspired debut album, *Soulside Journey*) and Immortal (born from the ashes of Old Funeral) converted to the sacred teachings of black metal. The echo of these events travelled fast and soon more bands made



*Picture of Dead's corpse used for the cover of  
Mayhem's live bootleg  
Dawn of the Black Hearts (1995)*

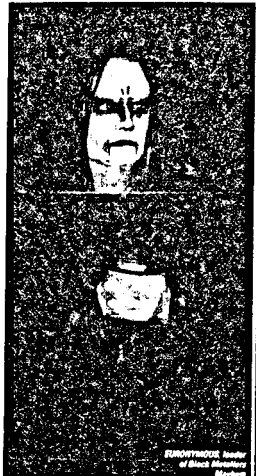
*Left: Dead on stage*

their appearance, like Emperor (from Telemark) and the one who would turn out to be the main character/antagonist in the tragedy that would soon unfold on the Scandinavian stage: Varg Vikernes, aka Burzum. In the meantime, Mayhem became the leaders of the newborn movement, thanks also to their incendiary live shows. Filled with self-mutilation and impaled animal heads, they provided the perfect framework for Sweden-born singer Dead. This moniker proved to be a tragically ominous alias, considering his sad demise – he committed suicide with a gunshot to his head. But not even the shocking death of a young 22-year-old, the first sign of a scenario that was taking on a more and more macabre undertone, seemed to subdue Euronymous' goals. He actually proceeded to exploit the event, turning Dead into a martyr for the cause who took his own life because he could not stand the decline of death and black metal caused by trendy kids invading the scene. Unfazed by the event (it is well-known that he took pictures of the corpse<sup>4</sup> and hid parts of the skull before calling the police), if not for the trouble of having to audition a new singer, Euronymous carried on with his label's activity. Deathlike Silence Productions was created with the intent to release material produced by this new congregation of upcoming bands. The



*Promo flyer of Aske by Burzum with  
the remains of Fantoft stavkirke*

# "WE ARE BUT SLAVES OF THE ONE WITH HORNS..."



FRONTMAN: leader of Black Metal Mayhem

In Norway, the Satanic Revolver, a satanic group of Neo-Fascist Death Worshipers, are burning churches to the ground. One of its leaders, VARG VIKEDIS, faces a prison sentence for arson. JASON ARKOPP tells the story of Coast Grisham...

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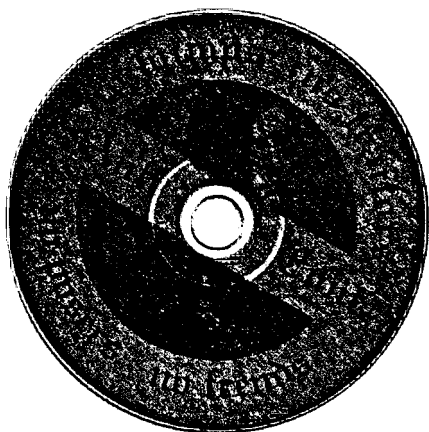
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The famous article on Kerrang! about Norwegian black metal

next step was the opening of a record shop called Helvete ("Hell"), which turned out to be a commercial failure but became a relevant meetingplace for the members of the black metal scene. It is in this phase that the first acts of graveyard vandalism, including tomb desecration and church defacement, made the news. These events were the first steps along an unfolding path of fire and blood. Before long, mere vandalism gave way to structured and organized pseudo-terrorist attacks towards the famous *stavkirke*<sup>5</sup>, the traditional Norwegian churches entirely built out of wood. In relation to this growing criminal phenomenon connected to the black metal milieu, the press started talking about the Inner Circle or the Black Metal Mafia. The year was 1992, and the world realized that something was happening in the far North of Europe: the well-known British music magazine Kerrang! printed a famous article titled *We Are But Slaves of the One with Horns...* which put a spotlight on the Norwegian scene, thanks to the typically British tabloid nature of the feature. In the meantime, the demanding non-music related activities that involved the members of the Inner Circle did not seem to compromise their creative nature: that same year saw the juxtaposition of a remarkable amount of arsons and the release of some essential masterpieces of the genre, including Immortal's *Diabolical Fullmoon Mysticism*, Darkthrone's *A Blaze in the Northern Sky* and Burzum's self-titled debut album. The latter came out on Deathlike Silence, but what seemed like a profitable collaboration between two of the main elements of

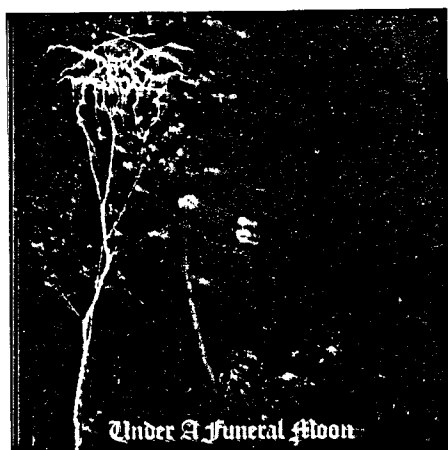
the scene, started to unravel. The relationship between Vikernes and Euronymous deteriorated around 1993, and numerous theories emerged: from ideological differences (Euronymous called himself a Communist and glorified the totalitarian regimes of Stalin and Pol Pot), to an inner power struggle to control the local scene. However, one of the reasons was much more practical and based on economics. Aarseth's management of the label's assets was less than transparent, if not careless, and the company soon accrued debt, failing to pay its bands. Whatever the circumstances, on August 10, 1993, Vikernes solved the dispute. He travelled from Bergen to Oslo (with his accomplice Snorre Ruch, leader of the band Thorns) and, according to the official reconstruction of the facts, he killed Euronymous with 23 stab wounds, leaving the massacred body in the stairwell of the building. Arrested nine days later, the trial took place in May 1994 and it is remembered as one of the biggest media events of metal's history and, in a way, it contributed to strengthening Varg Vikernes' "heroic" image in the deviant iconographic pantheon of some of black metal's followers. The sentence was cautionary: declared guilty of homicide and arson of four churches, he was sentenced to 21 year of prison (the maximum sentence provided by the Norwegian law)<sup>6</sup>.



*Silk-screen print on the CD of the compilation Nordic Metal: A Tribute to Euronymous (1995)*

The following years unfolded along divergent paths. Within the scene, fans of the genre gathered in two opposing factions, one pro-Vikernes and the other pro-Euronymous, which spared no accusations or insults via a curious campaign made of flyers and compilations to support the heroism of one, or in memory of the other. A funny situation, as Euronymous' bandmates were the first to show a certain lack of interest in the premature departure of Mayhem's guitarist.

On a strictly musical note, black metal was definitively consecrated with the release of some absolute milestones, the result of a state of grace in which Scandinavian musicians found themselves. In the two-year period between 1993 and 1995 the shelves of record stores were graced by albums like Mayhem's *De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas*, Burzum's *Det Som Engang Var* and *Hvis Lyset Tar Oss*, Darkthrone's *Under a Funeral Moon* and *Transilvanian Hunger*, Immortal's





*Pure Holocaust*, Emperor's *In the Nightside Eclipse*, Satyricon's *Dark Medieval Times*, Ulver's *Bergtatt* and Enslaved's *Frost*. Rarely has there been such an abundance of masterpieces in a short period of time within other music scenes; albums that indelibly marked the extreme scene, redefined the coordinates of the genre, widening the stylistic confines and introducing variations to the original paradigm. It is thanks to such releases that Norwegian black metal asserted itself on the international scene, partially relinquishing the blood-stained events that tarnished it

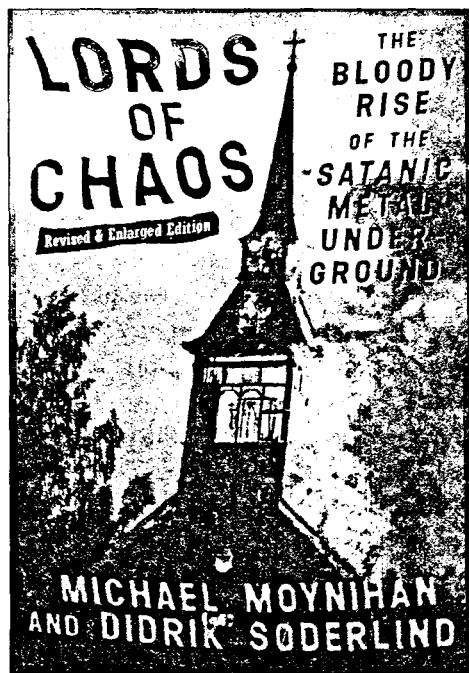
and becoming relevant from an artistic point of view.

Once it recovered from the cultural shock, the record industry waited for things to calm down and worked around the edgy rigorousness of the scene, until it capitulated between its tried mechanisms. Ironically, Burzum himself topped the sales charts of many underground mailorders, while bands like Emperor, Immortal, Darkthrone, Satyricon, Enslaved and Gorgoroth became ever so popular and found themselves touring the world or gracing the front covers of music magazines, until they distanced themselves not only from the primal *forma mentis* of the genre, but also from its original direction, each taking their own personal path.

Today, black metal is just another genre within the metal realm, and Norway is no longer its most relevant standard bearer. For many, it is a relief, for others it is the defeat of what came about as an all-encompassing life philosophy, which went on a suicide mission against a society that should have been razed and rebuilt from scratch. The final defeat for a genre that had belligerent and antisocial intents was the news, back in June 2011, that the Norwegian diplomatic corps would offer a course on the history of black metal, which demonstrates that over the years, it has become much more than a mere music trend: the morbid fascination of the headline news merged with the myth of a wild nature shrouded in fog and darkness, and became a formidable incentive for a somewhat macabre tourism. Drove of young metallers went on a pilgrimage to Norway and at the end of the day, the Norwegian government had to come to terms with the fact that the neglected son who had repeatedly harmed the beauty and long-lasting calm of the Nordic lands, had left a legacy, a history that could be employed for "socially useful" purposes with a good economic revenue. Complying with a modern law of retaliation, what had once plotted in the shadows to subvert the order, to spread fear, to raze all the symbols of Christian civilization, became a harmless pastime, an assimilated social phenomenon, similar to the viking village reanactments.



So far we have revisited some of the most relevant moments of this infernal Scandinavian season, a series of events that made the news worldwide and have been dissected in all their aspects. The Internet is full of essays, interviews and critical writings that serve the purpose of retracing even the most trivial details, thus inciting a cursed mythology with undeniable appeal for the younger adepts. The various publications released on the market have a rather different tone, some are sociologically pretentious, others offer an inadequate analysis of the musical aspects, which are not enough to define in its entirety a phenomenon that cannot exclude what happened outside the recording studios. The most talked about book, which has a well-deserved spot in every respectable black metallers' book shelf, is the infamous *Lords of Chaos* by Michael Moynihan and Didrik Söderlind. Published back in 1998 – and in a revised version in 2003 – it offers the first thorough analysis of black metal in its entirety, which momentarily leaves the artistic aspect aside in order to investigate the bloody rise of black metal, marked by burnt churches, pseudo-terrorist organizations and a blind glorification of all things antisocial. Closer to a true crime book than a music essay, it quickly became a best seller within the underground scene, was translated in several languages, and has become a sort of bible for black metal fans worldwide. Due to its popularity, the book inevitably received harsh criticism, especially from those musicians who ended up being portrayed in a less than flattering manner, thanks to some over the top statements given back in the days.



*The cover of Lords of Chaos, revised and expanded edition*

Varg Vikernes provides one peculiar example. The events that involve him are among the core themes of *Lords of Chaos* and he certainly did not keep quiet during his detention. Via his official website, he published a long review in which he retorted each one of the inaccuracies – according to him – contained in the book, attacking the authors in a series of articles labelled *Lords of Lies*, where he basically rails against his biggest enemy: the media. One could say that while doing time, Vikernes has rewritten or at least reinterpreted Burzum's entire history from a different perspective, which has nothing to do with what the magazines and TV proposed, particularly during his trial. From the reasons behind Euronymous' homicide (according to Varg a preemptive move, as Aarseth himself was planning on murdering him), to refusing alleged liaisons with the Church of Satan, the false myth of the Inner Circle (which he minimized, compared with what the media

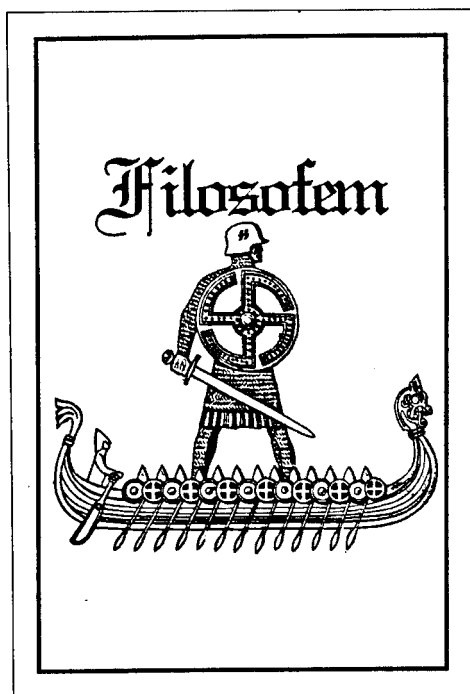
showed), to Burzum's musical background. Varg delved into each minor detail of what he reckons are misleading clues as to the history of black metal, which diverge from its original meaning. For what pertains to our field of investigation, the controversy around the book and the various conjectures about the genesis of the phenomenon are not of primary interest. Instead, it is necessary to pull the strings of the philosophical journey that Vikernes tackled during his imprisonment - during which he explored the theme of Norse mythology and gave dissertations on international politics, paganism, and the Jewish question - and the incredible influence that his ideas, carried by his undeniable charisma, will have far beyond the narrow Norwegian territory.



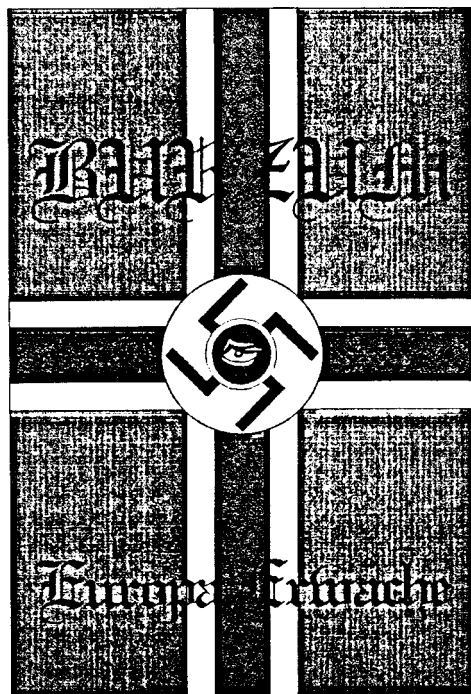
*Varg Vikernes in prison  
(private archive)*

Vikernes has stated several times that he has never been interested in Satanism and that he has always held nationalist sentiments from an early age, in spite of the attempt of the media to build the likeness of a perfect adept of the Devil. He himself, in an article on the subject<sup>7</sup>, said that when in his youth he used the word "Satanist" he did not do so from a Judeo-Christian perspective, but from that of a pagan who, along the path of conversion to Christianity, was considered a Devil worshipper. And likewise he reimagined the famous Fantoft church fire, which according to some reconstructions took place on June 6, 1992 at 06:00 am (which obviously hints at the most classic of satanic symbols, the 666); Vikernes pointed out that the day was chosen in honor of the anniversary of the first historically known Viking raid, which took place in Lindisfarne in 793<sup>8</sup>. If this is the truth or an adjustment made in hindsight, it is not for us to say, however it demonstrates that during his detention, the full rediscovery of paganism interrelated with an ideological aspect would become the center not so much of Burzum's artistic activity, but of Vikernes himself, as a man now free to collect his ideas and begin to organize them in a coherent manner in order to spread them across the Internet. This is how *Vargsmål* was put together, at first a juvenile attempt full of racist and nationalist rhetoric and Norse mythology - in addition to some obvious caveats about the murder that had him sentenced - highly publicized at the time, Varg himself would later admit it is full of mistakes, the output of a frustrated spirit, forced behind bars and without contact with the outside world. This book, however, marked the beginning of his career as a writer, which was to become more refined and focused on issues progressively further away from black metal and his personal condition as a recluse, and would begin to concentrate on Germanic mythology, paganism and the history of Norway. Before publishing *Vargsmål*, Vikernes had faced similar issues in





*The magazine Filosofem, published with the contribution of Varg Vikernes*



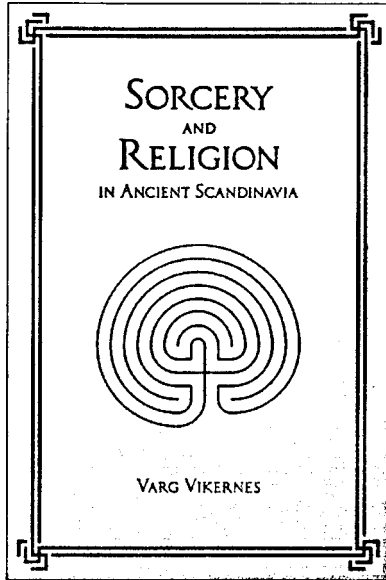
*Propaganda image used as inside back cover in an issue of Filosofem*

his contributions to some specialized publications, including the notorious *Filosofem* fanzine, published by Vidar von Herske, which also contained the writings of various personalities such as Kerry Bolton, David Myatt and Michael Moynihan himself, before he became the chronicler of the fiery Norwegian scene. In the following years, in addition to the numerous articles published on his website, ranging from the history of Burzum to the current international situation, he devoted himself to the writing of other pieces, such as *Germansk Mytologi Og Verdensanskuelser* which provides a personal analysis of the Germanic myth, or the recent *Sorcery and Religion in Ancient Scandinavia* completely focused on rituals, myths and mysteries of Europe's primordial religion. Beyond the academic value of these writings, Vikernes shows a genuine interest and a strict dedication that raised him to another level compared to many of his former colleagues, who have never gone beyond waving symbols and beliefs as a mere scarecrow, and this identifies him as a leading figure of a radical movement that, more than a source of artistic inspiration, is looking to become a modern ideologue.

In fact, during his period of detention, rumors spread that Varg was the leader of the Norsk Hedensk Front, which quickly evolved into the Allgermanische Heidnische Front (Hendrik Möbus of Absurd, a famous German NSBM band, was head of the section renamed Deutsche Heidnische Front that was formed in the late Nineties), a radical extremist organization of *völkisch* inspiration active until the early twenty-first century.

In an interview back in 2004<sup>9</sup> Vikernes told of his brief stay in the movement - entirely theoretical, given his status as a prisoner - but denied that he was the leader, a rumour that in his opinion was obviously spread by anti-Fascist organizations that already had the NHF in their sights.

The *völkisch* imprint remains part of Vikernes' mindset: in his fight against the Judeo-Christian invader, the question of "blood and soil" returns on several occasions as well as paganism (with a racial substrate), which he believes should be Europe's true religion. This vision, combined with some of his statements in support of the Nazi regime (sustained by the adoption of an unmistakable skinhead look and contacts with borderline personalities like Tom Eiternes of the Einsatzgruppe<sup>10</sup>), put him closer to the center of media attention, although he then corrected his aim as he felt distant from certain anti-Slavic sentiments, and a socialist and materialistic vision of the world, typical of Hitler's regime. He then coined the term "odalism", which embodies «*Paganism, traditional nationalism, racialism and environmentalism*»<sup>11</sup>. These words perfectly sum up the meaning of Vikernes' thinking and, in a broader framework, they are also the four cardinal points of the philosophy that completely permeates NSBM. No wonder then that Burzum, or rather its creator, is considered to be the presumed father of a genre that has always denied any paternity.



*The book Sorcery and Religion in Ancient Scandinavia (2012) by Varg Vikernes*

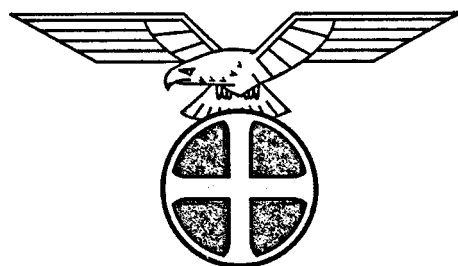


It would be wrong to think that Vikernes bears sole responsibility for the attribution of the "Fascist" or "Nazi" stigma to black metal. Nor is it a question that came into play overnight. It is instead a recurring theme that is generally glossed over by the media, who are much more focused on the satanic aspect and shock factor, and therefore it was more or less ignored, despite Kerrang! opening the infamous article published back in 1993 with the following sentence in the short introductory paragraph:

*«In Norway, the Satanic Terrorists, a sinister group of neo-Fascist Devil worshippers, are burning churches to the ground»<sup>12</sup>.*

The claim seemed indeed to have the sole purpose of trying to summon a further sense of outrage in the reader, and in truth it nearly hit the target. We must therefore go back to the early Nineties, trying to ignore the facts that filled the pages of

the newspapers, to pick up some clues that reveal a creeping pseudo-Nazi ideology. Historically, Norway has been one of the cradles of social democracy, with a strong leftist orientation, and this has made Nazism the most immediate foothold to cling to, in what was just another attempt at demolishing society, thus awakening its worst nightmares. In Norway's case, this nightmare goes by the name of Vidkun Quisling (1887 - 1945), founder of the Norwegian Fascist party Nasjonal Samling; collaborator at Hitler's service, he became the head of a puppet government during the German occupation. And although Vikernes (an admirer of Quisling and his scientific-philosophical theories that merged into a pseudo-religion called Universism) has recently

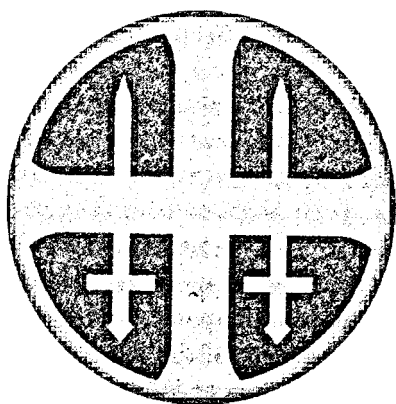


lavished in narrating the "exemplary behavior" of German troops in Norway and Denmark, claiming that the Scandinavian population has no reason to hold a grudge against Nazism, the common opinion is less inclined to adhere to this view. It was a government of occupation that stalled national sovereignty, something that is not

normally perceived as positive. Therefore, the anti Judeo-Christian feeling that marked early Satanism, and the pursuit of confrontation at all costs with civil society, finds a perfect companion-in-arms with the Nazi ideology (anti-Jewish and with pagan roots), a still wandering ghost that is able to arouse anxiety and confusion in the community, a union of seemingly irreconcilable forces in a coalition against a single enemy: the State and its Church. To this explosive mixture one should add further elements that black metal used to employ, although in a completely random manner and without much in-depth analysis, such as the concept of the Nietzschean superman, along with social Darwinism and some nationalist sentiments, all very popular concepts within the extreme Right. To prove these points, here are Hellhammer's infamous statements, which appeared in *Lords of Chaos*:

*«I'll put it this way, we don't like black people here. Black metal is for white people. [...] I'm pretty convinced that there are differences between races as well as everything else. I think that like animals, some races are more...you know, like a cat is much more intelligent than a bird or a cow, or even a dog, and I think that's also the case with different races»<sup>13</sup>.*

To outbursts such as these, one must add the use of symbols borrowed from the Third Reich and printed on the band's merchandise, such as the Totenkopf, or symbols from the aforementioned Nasjonal Samling founded by Quisling. Such an attitude would be incompatible with the current status achieved by some musicians over the last few years, and causes many problems - first of all with promoters and distributors - to bands who travel the world on tour or are on the bill of international festivals. Yet some clues feed suspicion, and it is the opinion of many that such outbursts were simply hidden behind



*The back of an old Mayhem long-sleeve shirt with the manipulation of one of the symbols of the Nasjonal Samling (original on the right) where the swords have become inverted crosses*

the scenes. Hellhammer himself, interviewed for the documentary *Until the Light Takes Us* (released in 2009, directed by Aaron Aites and Audrey Ewell), about the murder of Magne Andreassen - the homosexual killed in 1992 in Lillehammer by Bård "Faust" Eithun, who was then Emperor's drummer - refers to the victim by calling him a «*fucking faggot*», an epithet that will undoubtedly cause a few frowns among the supporters of political correctness. And Eithun too, talking to Moynihan and Söderlind during the drafting of their book, told of how the extreme Right and black metal were getting closer together, as a result of the rediscovery of the roots of their country and their cultural heritage, to celebrate and at the same time defend them from external interferences. Samoth of Emperor offered a different but valid perspective, which identifies the fascination of many members of the black metal scene to the Second World War with a constant search for the extreme<sup>14</sup>.

Both statements contain a grain of truth, and can be considered as two sides of the same coin, and serve as a turning point for the future of this unique combination of black metal and questionable politics. Any group in the future that uses a particular aesthetic arsenal will turn their choice essentially to one of these two macro-categories: a fascination for the extreme or the celebration of their own history.

Looking back to 1994, we find the release of *Transilvanian Hunger* marking another important step towards the rooting of an



ideological vision of black metal. As a matter of fact, Fenriz, one of the leaders of the band, asked the label to place the following statement on the back cover of the album:

*«We would like to state that Transilvanian Hunger stands beyond any criticism. If any man should attempt to criticize this LP, he should be thoroughly patronized for his obviously Jewish behavior»<sup>15</sup>.*

In response, the label sent out a statement in which they formally took their distance from the band's incomprehensible outbursts, adding that they would refuse to promote the album. At this point, Darkthrone realized they had gone too far, clashing with the strict limitations of the international music business, which clearly did not consider the proclamations and over the top statements on the agenda of the Norwegian scene as particularly attractive. The risk of being boycotted by a multitude of distributors, resulting in the album's total failure, overcame Fenriz and his bandmates' unrepentant verve, and they retraced their steps sketching a laughable defense<sup>16</sup> that will definitely not go down in the history of law practice, but in the end ensured the complete lack of a Nazi/Fascist political substrate in their music. In the game of statements, denials and counter denials, the album came out anyway with a writing in capital letters on the back cover that reads *Norsk Arisk Black Metal* ("Norwegian Aryan Black Metal"), something that initially nobody seemed to care about, but has been readily purged from all of the album's reissues.

Similar opinions were also expressed by Shagrath of Dimmu Borgir, back when his band were not yet enjoying global success and a perfect integration within the international metal scene. At the time of their seminal debut *For All Tid*, when asked if he thought black metal music was for white people, he replied:

*«Yes I do, and I would gladly cut the throat of every black person in the world. HAIL THE ARYAN RACE!!!»<sup>17</sup>.*

At this point, one might say that these two examples are, in fact, evidence that a certain political connotation had permeated the genre since the beginning. It is fair though to make a distinction and clear up some doubts: at this stage it would be improper to speak of Right-wing bands, as there was nothing even remotely comparable to the vicious



*The back cover of Transilvanian Hunger (1994) with the infamous writing «Norsk Arisk Black Metal»*

propaganda of some leading names in the contemporary NSBM scene, such as Der Stürmer or Wolfnacht. Unlike what happens today in the most extreme fringes, many musicians might have had opinions related to the extreme Right milieu, but in those years no one made it trademark of their recordings, and certain statements were relegated to some colorful interviews. However, a mild connection with certain radical circles is well documented, as it is repeatedly shown by different characters orbiting in that scene, but it is nothing that has evolved into something concrete. In many cases, certain views have been mitigated during the years, due to the different paths taken by the individuals, the comparison with different realities and, ultimately, the death of the Inner Circle, in which every word, gesture, and idea were amplified to the extreme. Hellhammer spoke clearly about those incongruous connections with the skinhead scene<sup>18</sup>, which on one hand was close to black metal's alleged political framework, and on the other was annoyed by the pseudo-occult arsenal sported by the genre. These brief overlappings actually ended up in nothing and were slowly passed over in silence, so as to suggest that certain statements were simply a corollary of a self-imposed "evil" image, a mere extension of the original marketing plan orchestrated by Euronymous.

Once the season of excesses died out, black metal was lulled by dreams of glory and the hard cash that began to float around it for several years, resting on a sterile repetition of musical and aesthetic patterns now widely accepted. Symbols turned cliché, devoid of any evocative power, victims of a mannerism that sanctioned the definitive desertion of the early philosophy. The revolt against "trendy" death metal failed and consigned black metal to the same fate, but as soon as this process of disintegration began, more or less in the mid-Nineties, the teachings of the Norwegians fathers were already starting to catch on abroad, taking root in the territories where the desire for payback is exponentially exacerbated due to a difficult past in socio/economic conditions that differ greatly from those of wealthy Norway. So, if the Inner Circle had indicated a possible path, it was countries such as France, but especially Germany and Poland, that took up the baton and turned black metal into a perfect weapon by assimilating its primary inputs - such as the fascination with nature, the cultural heritage and the occult - and giving them a nationalist, if not openly racist, connotation. Vikernes had shown the way with his explicit ideological stances, and some bands decided to follow it, slowly sharpening that thorn that would painfully pierce the side of heavy metal and political correctness. The baton was then collected by a host of new recruits determined to go further. Not for the sake of provocation, but because they are consecrated to an extremism that is destined to endure. Tending to consolidate itself in the deepest underground and harboring a grudge towards society that will withstand the lure of success. Far from Oslo, but following the streak of burning churches down to the heart of Europe, NSBM begins to take shape.



With the growth of this new threat, which manifests itself as a direct descendant of the Scandinavian forefather, many established musicians chose to clearly distance themselves from the potential political connotations that seem to hatch under the ashes:

*«I have nothing in common with NSBM. [...] Nazism is an ideology for the flock. It's not room for the strong individual, even though it claims to be. My moral is made out of chaos. I do not believe in universal values. They do not exist. I create the goods and the bads. The weak need to have the moral defined for them in order to survive. [...] It's also a well known fact that Nazism is a Christian movement and you can't create something sacred out of falseness. I don't care who buys or listens to my music, but never use my name under a sign based on slave moral and Christian thinking»<sup>19</sup>.*



Polish press against Gorgoroth for their show in Krakow

These are the words of King Ov Hell, known for his permanence in the ranks of Gorgoroth, a band whose lack of moderation is definitely not a winning trait. Suffice to recall the show held in Krakow, with sheep heads impaled on pikes placed at the edge of the stage, crucified naked people, and gallons of animal blood: a show that caused them a few problems, both with their label, Nuclear Blast, and the press, as well as the local authorities. A resumé that is anything but respectable, but far removed from any political

issues; a line of thought to which many choose to adhere (including most of the leading characters of the black metal scene), and not only within the Norwegian borders<sup>20</sup>.

Today, little is left of the politically incorrect proclamations that followed one another during those years, when the spotlight was on the Norwegian scene, and any ideological inspiration seems to have been buried. However, those bands that nowadays, although acting under quite different circumstances, tried to align to the original subversive spirit, did not fail to bring up the uncomfortable past of continental Europe. The most recent and ominously known episode is the one involving Norway's Taake, one of the most prominent bands of the contemporary black metal scene.

In March 2007 during a show held in Essen, Germany, the frontman Høst appeared on stage with a swastika drawn on his chest, triggering the reactions of the audience and the promoters (the swastika is in fact a banned symbol in that country). Following this show, all the other tour dates planned on German soil were canceled and the controversy moved on to the Internet and the music magazines, until a "clarifying" statement came from Høst himself:



*Høst of Taake with a swastika painted on his chest during the show in Essen, Germany*

*«We truly apologize to all of our collaborators who might get [into] problems because of the Essen swastika scandal, except for the Untermensch (subhuman) owner of that club; you can go suck a Muslim»<sup>21</sup>.*

Faithful to the traditional black metal principles, it is clear that the choice to paint a swastika - which is not usually part of the band's aesthetics - on his chest for a show in Germany was part of a not so clever logic, meant as a harmless form of provocation. The above statements were not enough to grant peace to the Bergen combo: on the insistence of none other than Kreator (who actually come from Essen), Taake were excluded from the bill of the Karmøygeddon festival in 2008. And again Høst was forced to take a stance on the incident:

*«This reaction is obviously because of the swastika episode in Kreator's hometown Essen during last year's Taake tour. I've clearly stated that TAAKE IS CERTAINLY NOT A POLITICAL NAZI-BAND, yet some people seem to still insist that we are. [...] I do realize that it is rather unforgivable to display a swastika in Germany, yes. On the other hand I strongly feel that black metal bands should allow themselves to use ANY kind of destructive/negative symbolism, as the basis of this expression is above all: EVIL!*



*Black metal is still not, and should never become, harmless like all other styles of housebroke metal. Frankly, I find it preposterous that we get away with lyrics about murder, torture, rape, necrophilia and suicide, but get boycotted for wearing a symbol (which, by the way, has nothing to do with the band's concept) on ONE single occasion. A part of our mission is to invoke negative feelings, so I found it quite appropriate to remind our German audience of their biggest shame. Some understood it and handled it well, whilst others overreacted far beyond expectation. [...] The behaviour of our self-proclaimed enemies is more similar to Nazism than anything we've ever done...»<sup>22</sup>.*



*The banner that appears on Taake's albums*

It is worth repeating: once ingrained, it is difficult to remove the stigma of the swastika, even if it is passed off as a stage gimmick pertinent to a specific shock tactic. If we must look for an ideological

profile in the work of the Norwegian band, it is summed up in a banner-manifesto (also used by Carpathian Forest and Gehenna) that appears on their official website, which recites the rather cliché slogan *Anti-Human Anti-Life*. Troublesome, short-sighted or in search of unnecessary controversy, it is clear that Taake are still far from embracing the ideological background that NSBM is based on. The fact that they are included, along with many others, in the long list of "Nazi" bands simply makes a movement that already has very transient boundaries, unexpectedly vast and indecipherable.



By virtue of the narrated facts, we can say that an ideological component was certainly present in the early Norwegian black metal, albeit inconsistent and never clearly expressed in the record releases. It is likely that part of these ideas were the result of a juvenile dissatisfaction or a desire for revenge against the stringent Norwegian social system, and in most cases it all faded naturally. These days, any pseudo-political steering can be interpreted in a context that seamlessly mixes nationalism with a never-dormant desire for excess, nothing that is particularly threatening except in the eyes of the more susceptible righteous people.

In other cases - and Varg Vikernes is the most obvious example, though not the only one - certain political/philosophical directions were exasperated, all the while remaining within the individual; and as despicable as they might be, as long as they remain within a private environment, they cannot assign an ideological value to the music said individual makes. In a nutshell, Vikernes might be a supporter of racist/revisionist/nationalist ideas, but this does not automatically make Burzum a project with a political agenda. If the influence that the band and its creator - *controversial* and *contradictory*, to recall the

definition given at the beginning - have on the new generation of National Socialist black metal is clear, it is equally obvious that we are dealing with a forefather who worked outside of a genre that did not formally exist yet, and therefore remains in a no man's land, on the border of actual NSBM.

Once the necessary distinctions are laid out, if we want to pinpoint a temporal reference, we can say that all the bands subsequent to the Burzum phenomenon in its entirety - music and ideas - who have consciously decided to follow a path not yet fully drawn, gathering examples, ideas, symbols, and putting them at the center of a new conception (ideological to the core) of black metal, have ventured into an uncharted and hostile territory, laying the first stones of what came to be known as "National Socialist black metal".

## Notes:

- 1 - Pentti Linkola (1932) is a Finnish writer, fisherman and radical ecologist.
- 2 - Although, philologically, what has taken hold in Norway is called the "Second Wave" of the genre.
- 3 - The traditional corpse paint used by black metal bands consists of a stylized black and white make-up usually put on the face (more rarely other body parts such as the arms) to give it a macabre appearance and a horror/ritualistic connotation. Without referencing tribal customs and religious disguises, the use of corpse paint in music can be traced back to Alice Cooper and the Misfits. Certainly more influential for the black metal congregation were the corpse paint tricks used by Slayer in the promotional photos of their first albums, as well as by Sarcófago from Brazil and Celtic Frost, or the elaborate mask of King Diamond (Mercyful Fate).
- 4 - The most famous will end up being used as the cover of *Dawn of the Black Hearts*, a bootleg containing a live recording, issued by Warmaster Records.
- 5 - The *stavkirke* are typical of the Middle Ages: built entirely of wood, they spread in Northern Europe after its Christianization. The Fantoft *stavkirke* is sadly famous for having been destroyed by a fire on June 6, 1992. Varg Vikernes was charged with arson, however he was acquitted at trial. The artwork of the mini-LP *Aske* uses a photo of the church after the fire.
- 6 - Will be released on probation in 2009.
- 7 - V. Vikernes, *A Burzum Story: Part V - Satanism*, published on Burzum's official website ([www.burzum.org](http://www.burzum.org)).
- 8 - V. Vikernes, from *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003.
- 9 - V. Vikernes, interview published on Burzum's official website ([www.burzum.org](http://www.burzum.org)), August 2004.
- 10 - The Einsatzgruppe was a small neo-Nazi terrorist group led by Tom Eiternes, that became prominent following the arrest of its activists in 1997. Apparently, among the activities planned by the group, there was that to free Varg Vikernes, whom Eiternes had met during a stay in prison. For a more detailed history of the Einsatzgruppe see the chapter on the political matrix of black metal in *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003.
- 11 - V. Vikernes, *A Burzum Story: Part VII - The Nazi Ghost*, published on Burzum's official website ([www.burzum.org](http://www.burzum.org)).

## ARISK BLACK METAL

12 - From the special feature on Norwegian black metal in Kerrang! n.436, March 1993.

13 - Hellhammer, from *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003.

14 - It is perhaps in this context that the brief and controversial adventure of Zyklon-B (from the name of the gas used in the extermination camps), a supergroup that also involved Frost and Ihsahn, should be interpreted. Their debut album *Blood Must Be Shed* created controversy because of some apocalyptic proclamations and indeed pro-mass murder, so as to push the band to publish a disclaimer on subsequent reissues in which they took their distance from racial or ideological issues.

15 - From Peaceville's press release.

16 - In their unlikely defense the band claimed that in Norway the term "Jew" is commonly used to identify something stupid, or with a negative connotation, and was used in the album's press release with the same intent.

17 - Shagrath, from *Darkness* 'zine n.1, August 1995.

18 - «*I know a lot of skinheads and we get along personally very well. [...] It's not so much about an interest musically, it's more about politics*» from *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003.

19 - Jotunspor, from Maelstrom ([www.maelstrom.nu](http://www.maelstrom.nu)).

20 - Prominent members of the Swedish extreme metal scene like Dark Funeral or Dissection will also distance themselves from the political interference in black metal. Also, a more articulate attack came from the Austrian band Summoning, via Protector, as they felt the need to issue a lengthy statement in which they not only dissociate themselves from any possible political affiliation (the input came from having discovered several Nazi-Fascist propaganda clips on YouTube with music from their repertoire), but also notice a progressive tendency within black metal to become a political tool of the extreme Right, which is regarded as highly negative for the genre.

21 - Press release published on Taake's official website (<http://taake.svartekunst.no>).

These anti-Islamic invectives made the news once again when the band was nominated for the Spellemann Prize 2012 (a sort of Norwegian Emmy). In a nation still shaken by Breivik's attack, these kinds of outbursts, including the verse: «*To hell with Muhammad and the Mohammedans*» in the song *Orkan* (on their latest album *Noregs Vaapen*), have generated controversy due to complaints from the Islamic community. The response of the band remained true to what was already stated: «*Taake has never been a political band, and we do not encourage either violence or racism*». And also: «*Our view, in the name of freedom of expression, is that it is shameful to adhere to Christianity or Islam. Incidentally, Christianity is mentioned in the same lyrics, but that doesn't seem to have been given any emphasis*». Høst, *Anti-Islam lyrics no barrier to Norway music prize* from The Local ([www.thelocal.no](http://www.thelocal.no)), January 2012.

22 - Press release published on Taake's official website (<http://taake.svartekunst.no>), January 2008.

## Black metal, conservative revolution and ethnonationalism

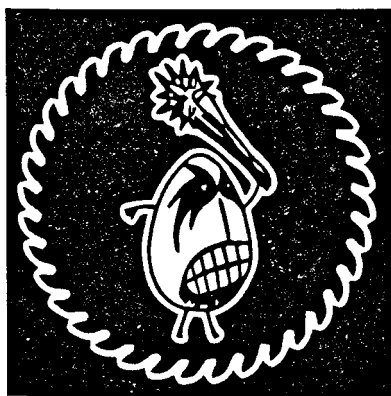
«FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF RACIAL NATIONALISM, THE MUSICAL GENRE KNOWN AS BLACK METAL IS ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POPULAR CULTURE PHENOMENA OF THE LAST TWO DECADES»<sup>1</sup>

[ALEX KURTAGIĆ]

We have explained that black metal has gone through several stages of development and today it is almost not even related to what it was in the early Nineties. The disorganized rebel fringe that raged in Norway, the offspring of a passionate but limited underground that made a certain naive elitism one of its strengths, has been replaced by a rampant multi-faceted reality that has followers all over the globe. While this has effectively marked the end of that "true" spirit that is still nostalgically praised by some veterans of the early days, it can also be said that intercepting a growing fan base and being the bearer of dissident content on a large scale, has made black metal a non-negligible phenomenon in popular counterculture. Embracing this perspective, one could say that once the crude anti-social and suicidal crusade of the early days (which failed anyway, for whatever reason) was left behind, black metal evolved into a more subtle instrument of propaganda and recruitment, that could operate between the tangles of the system, eluding the dictates imposed by the

market. This is the direction that is taken by Alex Kurtagić's analysis. Musician, writer, and founder of the English label Supernal Music, he has written several articles focusing on the role of black metal as an important element within a broader nationalist perspective.

His thesis are not unlike those already expressed, albeit with less acknowledgment, by Luca Leonello Rimbotti in his book *Rock duro anti-sistema*; with the relevant difference that Kurtagić, being active in the contemporary metal scene, was better able to focus on and identify the genres that were responsible for carrying alternative ideas, as opposed to the stagnant mainstream music scene.



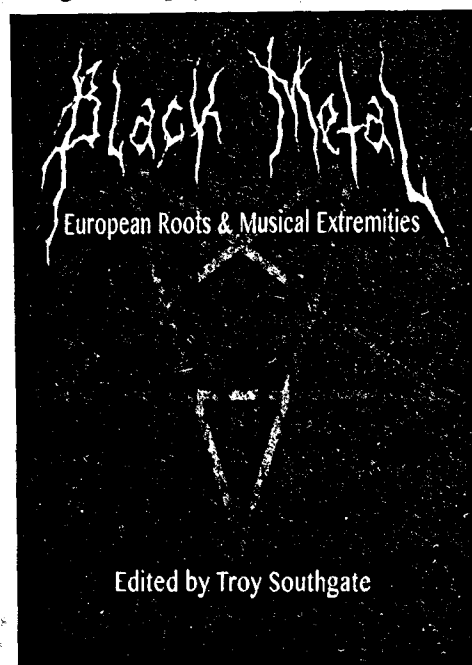
Logo of Alex Kurtagić's  
Supernal Music

According to Kurtagić, many central aspects of black metal are also traceable within two political/cultural movements of the past century, namely the *völkisch* and the Conservative Revolution, both particularly influential in Germany before the rise of Nazism. Whether it is a voluntary reference or a casual approach to the same theoretical foundations, black metal does however inherit some of their essential features that will define it both in terms of aesthetics and themes, thus outlining some aspects of the genre: the rejection of rationalism, liberalism, and an uncontrolled industrialization, counter-weighted by the rediscovery of local folklore, inspired by a form of romantic nationalism, a mystical vision of nature, and that concept of "blood and soil" that has already covertly appeared in black metal, but will become substantial in NSBM. The author remarks that the revival of these elements, seemingly forgotten and driven back into oblivion after the end of World War II, coincides with the decline that Christianity has faced from the Sixties onwards, leaving room for an alternative spirituality and a fascination for the occult that have gradually found their way into the rock/metal cauldron since the days of Led Zeppelin. The satanic direction taken by Quorthon and his band Bathory, only to swing back to paganism as a possible alternative to the Judeo-Christian presence, in fact

paves the way to the advent of a militant anti-Christianity, which Kurtagić divides into two types: Nietzschean (often mediated by the Satanism of Anton LaVey) and neo-pagan:

*«The Nietzscheans denigrate Christianity as an egalitarian religion of weakness, meekness, repentance, confession, and self-denial. The neo-pagans generally agree with the Nietzscheans, but emphasize the foreignness and deracinating influence of Christianity compared to the more authentic European pagan heritage. This outlook is explicitly völkisch, evoking the unity of blood and soil, of race and nation, and of spirituality and the Volk. The black metal scene also tends to be anti-Semitic for the same völkisch reasons they are anti-Christian»<sup>2</sup>.*

Therefore, indulging in the darkest recesses of the human soul by summoning feelings such as hatred, fear and depression is an expression of rejection of a trivial, materialistic, self-righteous and consumerist society which was founded in the shadow of a rampant capitalism. Even on a visual level, there are two recurring themes: on



Black Metal, the book published by Black Front Press which also contains an article by Kurtagić

one hand the glorification of war, of the martial spirit or a gory conflict, often reinterpreted in a mystical and idealistic manner with the help of paintings or illustrations of mythological inspiration. On the other side there is the glorification of nature (usually from a dark perspective in black metal, and a brighter point of view in the folk and viking metal genre), which evokes otherworldly scenarios, dark or otherwise untouched, as opposed to the wild and degrading urbanization of the industrial societies. A concept explored far and wide by Scandinavian black metal, which drew several remarkable aesthetic ideas from its own homeland and local traditions. In his examination, Kurtagić does not believe that such an inclination towards a wild nature pursues the return to a primitive and barbaric lifestyle, rather an aversion to the current model of civilization:

*«The black metal sensibility does not reject culture in favor of nature, but instead valorizes culture and nature, both conceived organically, over civilization, which is conceived in mechanistic and materialistic terms. In the black metal universe, cities were never built, the industrial revolution never occurred, and modernity never arrived»<sup>3</sup>.*

On a technical level, the rejection of modernity is echoed in the poor productions that are stripped of all frills, while on a philosophical level in embracing a pessimistic idea related to the principle of cyclical history inherited from the Indo-European tradition: at the end of a dark era (the Kali Yuga or "Iron Age" which we are currently experiencing), an inevitable cataclysm will put an end to evil and global corruption, initiating a period of rebirth and order. An apocalyptic and transcendental vision that within more radical groups sometimes leads to Nazi mysticism.

For Kurtagić, the advent of a wide fringe of projects devoted to NSBM is not exactly surprising. Actually, the same cultural logic can be found in the path that led from the *völkisch* movement to National Socialism, and from black metal to NSBM. More generally, heavy metal has its roots in the white working class that over the years has suffered the effects of a number of social upheavals, fostering the creation of an ethnocentric community, that is by its very nature conservative and resistant to change. In this sense, black metal is no exception, as it contains characteristics which are also found in metal, often accused of sonorous and conceptual immobility.

In a subsequent article titled *Black Metal Ethno-nationalism*, Kurtagić broadens the topic by examining the expansion of extreme metal in the areas of the former Soviet bloc, identifying a historic event as a prerequisite for the large-scale diffusion of these sounds:

*«The fall of Communism in 1989 led to a reassertion of long-dormant national identities. In this context, a radically neo-völkisch music scene almost inevitably attracted a young generation eager to reclaim its ancient roots in search of deeper meaning. Young black metallers in Eastern Europe were also drawn to National Socialism, perhaps because it was the diametric opposite of the hated former oppressor»<sup>4</sup>.*

East of the Iron Curtain, within a broader black metal scene, genres such as pagan metal, folk metal and NSBM got a foothold, often separated by extremely transient boundaries, because even in those bands that reject the specific "National Socialist" connotation there are ideas and feelings that are aligned to it, for example a certain racial consciousness. Kurtagić notes how the peculiar situation of those countries belonging to the former Soviet giant might have had a role in spreading certain ideologies even

# American Renaissance

There is not a truth existing which I fear or would wish unknown to the whole world.  
— Thomas Jefferson

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## Black Metal Ethno-nationalism

### Waging culture war.

by Alex Kurtagić

MTV cannot be counted among the champions of European civilization. In fact, its instincts are so far to the left, that an accurate expression of its red shift values would require complex mathematics. Fortunately, and as Eric Owens pointed out in his November 2000 article for *American Renaissance*, "The New Nationalist Music," not all modern popular music comes from the left of Trotsky. Mr. Owens' article provided a useful overview of the various nationalist music scenes that emerged since the 1970s, each offering an alternative subculture for young generations disillusioned by the mainstream.

Much has happened since 2000, however, and at least some of the music scenes surveyed by Mr. Owens have seen considerable growth and gone on to spawn new scenes. It is worth re-visiting Mr. Owens' topic, and shedding some light on what has driven the growth of nationalistic music during the past decade.

Although Mr. Owens discussed several genres (Oil, Apocalyptic Folk, *Nationale révolutionnaire*, and Black Metal), I will focus only on Black Metal. This is my area of expertise and, most significantly, some Black Metal artists have achieved commercial success and even collected industry awards. Commercial success poses a number of interesting questions regarding Black Metal's potential gradually to legitimize its more radically anti-system ideals, despite efforts to censor it from without or white-wash it from within.

Before we examine Black Metal, we should review the most significant historic events in and outside of the scene from a racial point of view. To my mind,



Anti-Christian symbolism in an album cover of the Faroe Islands Viking Metal band, Tyr.

they are the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and its rise in the West, the appearance of more explicitly political or nationalist offshoots of Black Metal, and the increasing visibility and accep-

### Mainstream popular culture is a desert for European-descended peoples.

tance within the mainstream of bands with links to Black Metal.

#### Origins and Offshoots

Black Metal originated as an offshoot of Heavy Metal, and is so called because

of the occult and satanic imagery and lyrics that first defined it in the 1980s. Although it retained the basic elements of guitars, bass, drums, and vocals, from its beginnings, its sound was more extreme, its lyrics more esoteric, and its tone more serious. Black Metal artists during the 1980s were too few and obscure for us to speak of a scene proper, and its fans were part of a wider Heavy Metal/Thrash Metal subculture.

It was not until the early- to mid-1990s, with the rise of a radical circle of Black Metal musicians in Scandinavia, especially in Norway, that Black Metal developed into a full-blown scene. It would probably have remained obscure

*Continued on page 3*

beyond the narrow confines of the most intransigent NSBM: freed from the ghost of Communism, they now risk mass immigration. Furthermore, for some countries, entering the European Union might have taken away a chance for self-determination, exposing them to the dangers of a forced Westernization (if not an actual Americanization). A phenomenon that could lead to further Ethno-nationalist stances for which black metal would act as a vehicle, intercepting the younger generations. The attention that some European anti-Fascist organizations have turned to the rising phenomenon of extreme metal in general (black, but also folk and Viking) seems to confirm this.

In short, from the West to the East, there is an ongoing rediscovery of the *völkisch* movements's philosophy from the past century, the awareness of the need for a strong national identity and a rejection of society and its behavioral patterns. Black metal creates dissent using a fragmented and scattered network that is almost impossible to eradicate because it stays on the sidelines. In view of a collapse of the world system, and the clash between opposing philosophies that might follow (nationalism versus liberalism, Tradition versus modernity), the genre could play a significant role:

*«We must make sure we are ready when the present system comes crashing down, as it must. The battle will not be won with black metal, of course, but music is important – has always been important – in any countercultural movement, and because it is a quintessentially European art form, it provides a radical, pure, and ferocious source of energy and conquering fury. Without it we will never win the culture war»<sup>5</sup>.*

## Notes:

1 - A. Kurtagić, *Black Metal: Conservative Revolution in Modern Popular Culture*, from *The Occidental Quarterly* (www.toqonline.com), April 2010.

2 - Ibid.

3 - Ibid.

4 - A. Kurtagić, *Black Metal Ethno-nationalism*, from *American Renaissance* vol. 21, n. 6, June 2010.

5 - Ibid.

# Nazism & Satanism

Answer to Jeffrey DeBooby

first read of the book, "Naziism, Racism, and Satanism" by Jeffrey DeBoob. The Black Panther has been reported to be a member of the Church of Satan. Since then any other author of Satanic magazines more often than not can recall. DeBoob is editor of his journal, "Satanic Publications," which he advertises as "Satanism for the masses." DeBoob's authoritarian nonsense.

bse DeBoob

# What is Arg

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killed someone else  
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obtain a ritual purgation  
offering gifts to the  
offender could be put  
existed in all Aryan soc-  
ties of Homer, through  
Anglo-Saxons, the Welsh  
Saxon and Germanic soc-  
was called Wergild, and  
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# Does Politically Correct "Paganism"

**make you want to  
blow fucking  
chunks?**

Does the whole New Age movement sound just like a bunch of fucking hippie, Jesus freak bullshit to you?

**Pagan Rev:**

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**Socialism**

**Revolution**

# socialism Revolution



# Satan-Jugend

## From the pentagram to the swastika, and back again

«NAZISM WAS NOT INITIATED BY SATANISM, BUT ANNEXED BY IT. THE PROCESS IS AS OLD AS HISTORY. BUT HISTORY CANNOT REMEMBER A PERIOD NOR A CONDITION SO APPROPRIATE TO OR SO PROMISING FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GRAND SATANIC PURPOSE AS THOSE WHICH HAVE PRESENTED THEMSELVES IN GERMANY BETWEEN THE YEARS 1920 AND 1940»<sup>1</sup>

[LEWIS SPENCE]

**B**efore we can delve into NSBM, addressing the many varieties of this music scene with its branches and deviations, we need to take a step back and try to find some sort of thematic starting point. In this chapter we will try to give a proper structure to those elements of a political and - most importantly - spiritual/esoteric nature that have provided the fertile ground from which, starting from the Nineties, we have been able to witness the relentless proliferation and consolidation of the phenomenon. Undoubtedly, the mythology of NSBM borrows heavily from the chronicles of Hitler's regime, but concentrating on this thought is misleading and superficial, and a deeper investigation reveals numerous surprising aspects: original doctrinal blends, ready to compose a curious mosaic where Satanism, neo-Nazism, Atlantean cults, Nordic revival and apocalyptic visions bind in a bleak and diverse fresco. It is about retracing a tightrope between past and present, where the past sinks between the remote suggestions of ancient Arctic Aryan homelands, while the present tries to rediscover the meaning of a cherished "golden age", pending an (unlikely?) dissolution of the monotheistic religions.



The imagery that ties the the Nazi regime, in forms that are sometimes faint and sometimes indissoluble, to a sulphurous secret conspiracy dates back to the Second World War. This imagery is reflected particularly well in a certain war propaganda that painted the Third Reich - without too much difficulty - as a satanic emanation lead by a pagan barbarian in a brown shirt called Adolf Hitler. In this regard, a book like *The Occult Causes of the Present War* (1940) by English esotericist Lewis Spence is particularly important: supported by several reprints during the years of open hostilities against Germany, in its mere 150 pages there is a high concentration of themes of pagan as well as evil nature that correlate Hitler's regime to the realm of the underworld. Starting from the analysis

of Kaiser Wilhelm II's private library (a large collection of books on witchcraft and the like), Spence describes the satanic rise of National Socialism exposing characters, events and slogans of the Teutonic enemy to a study which demonstrates the irrefutable reality of a country, Hitler's Germany, in the grip of the arcane power emanating from the Devil<sup>2</sup>.

This dark pagan revival, which leads to a combination of the austere and warlike Norse mythology with cryptic, Luciferian machinations, finds its sediments in the ongoing European military campaign. Yet it is only a beginning, a still weak echo. Following the defeat of the "Thousand Year Reich" and the banning of its entire ideology, the fascination and consequent attractiveness triggered by what is forbidden will feed streams of rumors and dark legends, which in many cases are still around. And so it is that, in addition to the Nazi phenomenon, historically understood as a political doctrine and gradually metabolized through the analysis of hundreds of scholars and thousands of pages dedicated to it, one of the most debated, popular and hated currents by the orthodox historiography will gradually but relentlessly emerge: the so-called occult Nazism or magical Nazism. A real subgenre that over the years, in a crescendo of interest from the general public, has prompted a multitude of publishers to release an unspecified number of books, the bulk of which are absolutely worthless, all focused on the alleged esoteric plots arisen in the shadow of the swastika.

*«The enduring fascination with Nazism is well illustrated by the amount of new books that each year are dedicated to Hitler and other Nazi leaders, World War II, the SS, concentration camps and the Holocaust. The total defeat of the Third Reich, and the suicides and executions of its main exponents have further mystified the image of Nazism. To a young observer, National Socialism often appears as a mysterious interlude in modern history.*

*The movement's aura of mystery justifies the plethora of popular novels that describe the adventures of fugitive war criminals, post-conflict secret Nazi organizations and the resurgence of Hitler many years after his supposed death. The appeal of this sensational literature lies in the disturbing intrusion of an extinct order, generally considered monstrous and forbidden, in the usual world of liberal institutions. And this fascination exerted by the gruesome aspects of Nazism does not remain confined to literature. Signs and symbols of the Third Reich are often collected by psychopaths and sadists, while far-Right groups and strange sects have adopted Nazi uniforms and ceremony. This literature of clandestine rebirths, illegal initiations and permanence of evil ideas and agencies marks the boundaries of a realm of speculative history that has built, upon the basis of weak evidence and vague reports, the hypothesis that National Socialism was linked with occultism»<sup>3</sup>.*

The hazy imagery that stirs nervously between the still smoldering embers of World War II paints scenes of particular concern. Soon after the *Götterdämmerung* of the Third Reich, dated April 30, 1945, the idea of Hitler being still alive and hiding in a secret location waiting to unleash another holocaust of planetary scale takes hold. An unlikely hypothesis according to the official history - and yet cyclically revived by scholars of



The cover of...*La distruzione del mondo?*  
first edition, printed in Rome (1948)

dubious fame – that over time culminated in a reckless exploitation of the phenomenon (especially in terms of printed paper and motion pictures), with a unique peak during the Seventies.

Among the earliest examples we find a little known Italian publishing house (Edizioni Rores in Rome), which in 1948 published a mysterious book that is still extremely rare and sought after, entitled *La distruzione del mondo? Hitler prepara...* ("The destruction of the world? Hitler is plotting...") an essay of inquiry with heartfelt as well as dramatic tones. Its author, a certain Darius Caasy (probably a pseudonym), is outlined in the following terms:

«...journalist who has made himself known in Italy for some of his sensationalist articles published in newspapers, he devoted himself particularly to carrying out "special reports" like conducting international investi-

*gations, the latest, in order of time, being the one about the Russian and American military training in the Arctic regions in anticipation of a Third World War»<sup>4</sup>.*

The book is divided into two distinct parts: *Verso la distruzione del mondo* and *La terribile vendetta* ("Towards the destruction of the world" and "The terrible revenge"), and it is accompanied by maps and documents that would prove the relentless clandestine action of the survivors of the deposed Reich. It tells of secret bases and fortress cities scattered in the Antarctic underground, as well as new forms of atomic energy and the use of technologies that span from sci-fi aircrafts to weapons of mass destruction. It is 1948, it has been only three years since the last great World War (and just one since the famous "alien crash" in Roswell, New Mexico), and Caasy's book already lays the basic elements of a universe made of UFOs, Nazis and top secret military installations hidden among the ice at the edge of the world.

«...Hitler is alive, Darius Caasy believes that he is the "occult leader" of clandestine actions. The passage of fireballs, the flying spheres, saucers, the blue lights in the skies of Europe and America, the appearance of mysterious aircrafts and submarines as well as some recorded strange phenomena would be the revealing and mysterious signs that keep on the alert the police forces of various countries.

*A description of the clandestine activities, of the dark plans, and secret cities, complete the book with which the author seeks, with a terrifying description of an apocalyptic probability, to draw attention to the need for a just and lasting peace between winners and losers, which prevents the development of a desire for revenge and kills the hate»<sup>5</sup>.*

Mixing science fiction, conspiracy theories, alien technologies and associating the whole thing to a perfect enemy, such as the Third Reich which was defeated only three years earlier, certainly is an excellent editorial idea. In a few dozen years, it will be another area related to Hitler's regime, the "magic-occult" one, that will find its lifeblood in writings such as *The Spear of Destiny* by Trevor Ravenscroft and the famous *The Morning of the Magicians* by Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier. The latter, a fictionalized amalgam of mysterious events and characters, has perhaps contributed more than any other book to cement the mythology of Nazism's arcane and esoteric nature. A real rhapsody of rituals and sacred symbols where the main scene is perpetually occupied by secret societies (from Thule to the elite of the Black Order of the SS), theories on the Hollow Earth and the underground abode of the King of the World, pseudo-science of Nordic inspiration, will to power, and obscure psychic powers.

The success of a book that has artfully - as well as freely - blended science and esotericism under the auspices of the swastika, made us witnesses of the avalanche of research papers and books that, almost invariably in photocopy format, have slowly saturated the shelves of many libraries. And although some great titles have emerged from this thriving publishing undergrowth, free from sensationalism and easy mercenary enticements, the basic elements of this occult panorama largely insist on the basis of a suggestive and too often legendary nature. Not surprisingly, very often those groups that are openly NSBM, and not so inclined to academic insights, prefer to draw from the urban legend imagery described above. A mythology of convenience, an indefinite and mystic elaboration with which it is possible to transfer the coarse satanic legacy of primitive black metal to a new context, always "dark" and "evil", but above all more mature, credible (at least for those concerned) and strengthened by a particularly extreme connotation.

*«The esoteric side of NS is much more profound than the political one. [...] It is well-known the occult activities of the Thule Society, the main supporters of the NSDAP, as well prominent rune masters as Karl Maria Wiligut who were responsible for the revival of the runik and occult Aryan traditions. These traditions were also researched and in a part revived by another important runologist, Guido Von List. In his Secret of the Runes one can find a great deal of information about Aryan occultism. Another important part of NS occultism is also found within the SS organisation. Ordenburgs like Wewelsburg were created for the sole purpose of educating the Aryan elite in the Traditions. [...] NS is not a mundane political movement; on the contrary, it is the manifestation of the Aryan ethics and spirits»<sup>6</sup>.*

As part of this initiation strand there are three recognizable and prominent characters, with clear magic-religious qualities: Italian traditionalist philosopher Julius Evola, the Euro-Indian writer Savitri Devi, and the former Chilean diplomat Miguel Serrano. The last two authors are considered controversial, especially for the singularity with which they portray Adolf Hitler and the Nazi movement. Specifically, Savitri Devi and Miguel Serrano praise the Germanic Führer as a divine incarnation descended on earth to redeem people and show them an incorruptible rule of absolute truth. Theories which several NSBM groups, and not only them, fully draw inspiration from.

Going back to the turmoils that have contributed to the rise of the magical and illicit phenomenon of post-1945 Nazism, it is a must to mention the well-known Church of Satan, founded in San Francisco in 1966 by Anton Szandor LaVey. In this case, putting aside the *Satanic Bible* (a bestseller since its first edition, dating back to December 1969), it is the complementary book *The Satanic Rituals* that LaVey published exactly three years later which brings back the Germanic occult current due to the transcription of a particular rite, *The Law of the Trapezoid - Die elektrischen Vorspiele*, reinvented to match the unique philosophy of the California-based black Pope<sup>7</sup>.



Anton Szandor LaVey, founder of the Church of Satan



Taking all the factors thus far exposed, and bringing them back to a proper “underground” dimension, albeit with major international ramifications, the real leap in quality for what concerns the music network we are referring to, lies in its ideal spokesperson back in the early Nineties: New Zealander Kerry Raymond Bolton. Bolton's endeavours, (his frenetic activity will be an ideal catalyst for political extremisms, satanic cults and artistic vanguards, especially in music), will prove particularly effective and instrumental in kicking off the first overt partnerships between contemporary Satanism and the multiple expressions of neo-Nazism.

Bolton, born in 1956, began his militancy during the Seventies, stepping into the Democratic Nationalist Party and later getting involved in movements such as the New Zealand National Front, the New Force (later renamed the Nationalist Workers Party) and the New Zealand Fascist Union. Later on, Bolton also founded his own action group called the National Destiny. The latter deserves a mention because, as some

evident graphic solutions in the movement's symbol suggest, it is profoundly influenced by a little-known American group called National Renaissance Party. Founded in Manhattan's Upper East Side in the late Forties, this group made the headlines several times during the leadership of James Hartung Madole between the Sixties and Seventies. Although formally regarded as yet another American neo-Nazi entity, the National Renaissance Party conceals many facets and singularities that require an in-depth analysis. It is a movement whose most controversial aspect comes from the combination of particularly aggressive and radical politics, with principles of occult nature,



*James Hartung Madole, in the middle, surrounded by his militants*

not least being the doctrines of the newborn Church of Satan. Madole will weave a network of contacts with the New York chapter of LaVey's Church and, over the years, his interest and admiration for the theological teachings of the famous Russian noblewoman Helena Petrovna Blavatsky will emerge in a predominant manner, so as to be incorporated as an integral part of the party's ideology.

To this day, many researchers and political ac-

tivists consider the experience of the National Renaissance Party as a meaningless - if not counterproductive - groan in the fragmentary milieu of post-1945 extreme Right. Some go even further, to the point of suspecting government infiltrations in the NRP: the eccentricities of its last leader would in fact be the result of a strategy by the American authorities aimed at unequivocally discrediting the anti-system movements of that time. For Kerry Bolton, however, James Madole remains an excellent leader as well as a reference point. He will praise him with tributes and in-depth biographical articles, among which stands out the writing ... *A salute to James Hartung Madole (Father of Post-War Occult-Fascism)*. Here Bolton exposes an efficient synthesis of Madole's thought, addressing issues such as the so-called Third Position (devoted to the rejection of capitalism as much as Communism), the abandonment of Christianity, the tight association with the satanic groups in the East Coast, the awakening of the god hidden in each "superior man", and the project of a new Atlantis in deference to the esoteric teachings of people like Aleister Crowley, Eliphas Lévy and Peter Ouspensky, all mentioned as examples of a natural, as well as common anti-democratic vision within the occult tradition.

It seems that for Bolton it is vital to promote, by any means, all those organizations, groups and/or factions all over the planet whose work may prove useful in the fight against a common enemy: global capitalism touted by the so-called "New World Order". In this respect, one can not but be impressed by the amount of writings and publishing activity that has seen Bolton as a protagonist during the last decade of the past century. His first editorial experiments date back to the early Eighties, with the publication of the newspaper of the political movement New Force, called Attack!, followed by two peculiar bulletins: The Realist, which was predominantly political and social, and The Watcher, of an explicitly esoteric nature. The experience gained from the output of these papers will then merge, in 1992, in a controversial fanzine called The Heretic, which will claim to be a propaganda publication: «*Kulturkampf, realpolitik and esoterrorism*»<sup>8</sup>.

In the decade preceding the collapse of the printed fanzine due to the onset of the Internet (with the inevitable differences due to the way information is accessible and usable, digitally), Bolton's writings prove effective as ever. The newsletters and magazines, as well as documents of political-esoteric propaganda distributed from his home base in New Zealand are the binding agents that shape the organizations of occult nature founded by the forty-year-old Wellington native. This is how, in 1992, the Order of the Left Hand Path (OLHP) was founded, renamed two years later Ordo Sinistra Vivendi, which will be followed – according to a downward spiral – by the Order of Deorc Fyre. This sort of sectarian impulse permeated by elitism reflects its ideas in the writings of Nietzsche, Jung and Spengler. Originally, the main themes were strongly related to LaVeyan Satanism (from which they will gradually distance themselves, in favor of much more radical aspirations), as well as to Eurocentric paganism and various currents of magical Nazism. Bolton was also among those responsible for the foundation of the so-called Black Order (from whose ashes groups like the White Order of Thule will emerge), an organization that, at the top of its programmatic mission, aims: «*To study the esoteric currents underlying all*

**the Heretic**  
PO BOX 21-252 PETONE WELLINGTON NEW ZEALAND

A JOURNAL OF THE KULTURKAMPF • REALPOLITIK • ESOTERRORISM

October 1994      -Quarterly-      No. 10

**A Blaze in the Northern Sky**  
(by Harding Varge and Wiking Herske)

I guess at least some of you will have heard about disturbing actions being taken by the Norwegian Black Metal Mafia so-called, involving musicians from BURZUM, DARTHMOR, MAYHEM, EMPYRON, DEICAPITAL, or ENSLAVED, and ranging from desecration and burglary to arson and murder... Yet how much do you know about it?

There has been so much babbling and rambling from mass-media footage to underground coverage- as much in Europe as in America (I have The Alien Elite in mind too)- that facts are overlooked...

**FALLEN SPIRE**  
AKAKE CHURCH, BERGEN

**HARDING VARGE**

# Suspire

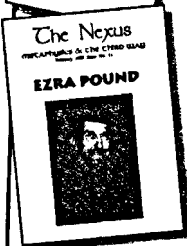
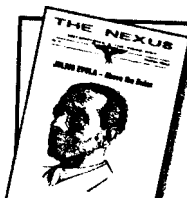
the official publication of the  
Ordo sinistria Vivendi



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# THE NEXUS

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aspects of European history and culture, including National Socialism»<sup>9</sup>.

The second half of the Nineties was a particularly thriving period: Bolton's publications spread around the world, reaching readers located as far as Argentina and Ukraine. In the wake of The Heretic, other publications saw the light, such as The Nexus and Western Destiny, and also Suspire (the bulletin of Ordo Sinistria Vivendi), Erda, and The Flaming Sword - the last two both dedicated to the activities of the Black Order. The opening of several lodges abroad - six in Europe alone, plus other chapters in Australia and the United States - offers a



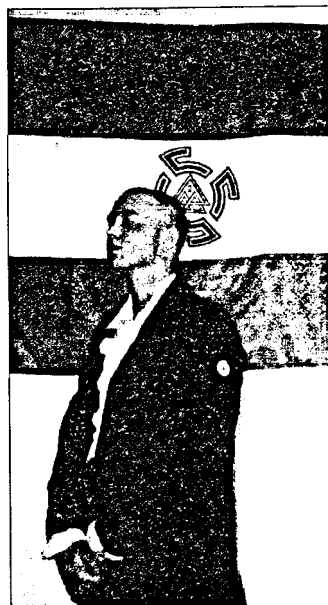
Group picture for the Wotan Lodge. Australian chapter of the Black Order mostly composed of members of the seminal NSBM band Spear of Longinus



unique attraction that brought about the involvement of many young metal fans. It is no coincidence that the first Australian grouping, the "Wotan Lodge", includes among its founders and leaders the main exponents of the first wave of NSBM: Spear of Longinus, the pioneers of "Nazi Occult Metal". It is however curious to note that, even though in the pages of the papers edited by Bolton there is a wide coverage of various black metal (and industrial music) ensembles, as a matter of fact, the mastermind behind these projects does not cultivate any specific interest for said genres<sup>10</sup>, and he does not fail to criticize the work of the Black Metal Mafia.

These are years of particular, almost feverish upheaval, during which the spectrum of alliances extends from the Southern hemisphere to the Northern hemisphere, embracing the work of two particular entities housed in the UK: the Order of the Jarls of Bælder and the Order of the Nine Angles.

The first, founded by Stephen Bernard Cox at the end of 1990, was originally established as a modest newsletter under the name Fraternity of Bælder, but quickly evolved into a strong



*T. Reinders of the Circle of Jormungandr, Dutch esoteric circle similar to the Order of the Jarls of Bælder*



*Euro MP John Stevens (centre) visits the cultural library centre in Reading. Pictured left is Stephen Cox and right, Marco Lockhorst*

### Library with a difference

THE Euro-sceptics may well disapprove, but a pioneering cultural library in Reading hopes to dispel the myth of the small island mentality with which we are sometimes viewed.

And Thames Valley Euro MP John Stevens was so impressed by

what he saw on a visit to the library in Elmhurst Road that he has promised to help out with contacts and possible grants.

The brainchild of Stephen Cox and assistant Marco Lockhorst, the centre is planning summer courses for students from overseas.

*British MEP John Stevens visiting the archives of the Order of the Jarls of Bælder*

community of kindred spirits that went beyond the English coast, involving members residing in over forty different nations. Many young bands dedicated to metal approached this sort of pagan and occult group of multidisciplinary imprint, whose activities, developments and objectives are well described in the pages of Bælder, the magazine of the order, which bears the subtitle: "The pan-European fraternity of knowledge". Browsing through it, the key themes put in black and white do not deviate much from its New Zealander counterpart: Norse mythology, pagan rituals and festivities, meditation practices with runes, sacred symbolism, esoteric Nazism, Satanism and racial identity,



plete historical profile: it is an organization of expressly elusive nature, whose bulk of activity has always been carried out in a semi-clandestine way. Very few members, no events open to the public and a persistent cloak of anonymity that, with the passage of time, has given rise to numerous rumors and speculations on the actual design and purpose of the order. What is known comes largely from the documentation released by ONA itself, as well as the sophisticated satanic propaganda newspaper called Fenrir. The organization is said to have been born during the Sixties, although - as confirmed by one of its official spokespersons<sup>11</sup> - the doctrine of reference has its roots seven millennia back, when the civilization of Albion was ruled by a dark goddess now known as Baphomet. According to the ONA, the anthropomorphic figure with the head of a goat typically associated with satanic iconography is nothing but a lie, a distorted form of the original image of the goddess: a

along with the writings of Lovecraft, the mystery of Atlantis, underwater archeology, UFOs... a real paradigm of heresies and nonconformist topics. In the pre-Internet era, such writings quickly became a valuable - for some invaluable - educational resource, which integrated the exchange of audio and printed material from nation to nation worldwide. A generation of young outsiders, hungry for counterculture and *esotericism*, found a primary resource that was useful to its education, marked by a cryptic spirituality imbued with "blood and soil".

The other example of Anglo-Saxon origins which manifested itself in those years within the same occult horizon, is the infamous Order of Nine Angles. In this case, however, it is hard to trace a com-



Osservando l'abisso: ONA's only official text  
published in Italy in 2012 in a  
limited edition of 63 copies

"mother of the blood" that should be represented as a dark menstruating woman embodying the Left Hand Path associated with the feminine power.

During the Nineties in particular, the ONA earned a bad reputation thanks to the spreading of loads of documents meant to convey a particularly elitist, amoral and fierce satanic doctrine. These teachings suggested that adherents go beyond the concept of "good" and "evil" pushing towards actions that did not exclude the sacrifice of those humans that are considered unworthy and inferior. If it is true that certain satanic groups founded during the last century, such as the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set, arose as a reaction to the prevailing establishment, we can also say that, in its intents, the ONA arose as a phenomenon of additional reaction to the organizations just mentioned:

*«A lot of people at the Temple of Set and the Church of Satan are trying to reestablish Satanism as a moral religion. Something which is sanitised, something which is misunderstood, and really quite nice. What the ONA is doing is countering that by saying, "No, it isn't". It's regaining the original darkness of what Satanism is, because if Satanism isn't evil, then what is?»<sup>12</sup>.*

There is a further and primary element to add to what has just been said above, which sees the ONA flirting in a rather aggressive if not explicit manner with Nazism and its various representatives:

*«I regard the ONA as the only true Anarchist group. A group which can use extreme Right-wing politics and extreme Left-wing politics. We're not seduced by either side, we don't regard them as "true" in any sense, they're just a means to an end. [...] An ONA member doesn't "become" a Nazi or a Communist, he just uses those movements. [...] We have something of a reputation for dressing in Nazi uniforms and invoking the spirit of Hitler. It stems from the deeds of the past which people haven't seen from a magical perspective»<sup>13</sup>.*

Despite these clarifications, the coexistence (and marked convenience) between the ONA and Nazism manifests itself so forcefully and consistently that it cannot be ignored in any way. Even the simple dating of each document of the order normally refers to 1889, Adolf Hitler's year of birth, as the year zero and reference point for the whole satanic community. The references to the Third Reich are countless, albeit ritualistic and unorthodox, in addition to the numerous texts that delve deeply into the relationship between Satanism and the Aryan identity of its disciples.

*«Nazi Satanism is definitely the most extreme example of the cultural revival of Fascism. Inspired by LaVey and Aquino, these neo-Nazi groups combine satanic rituals and magical invocations with the worship of Hitler and the Nazi ideology. The Satanist Nazi attack against Christianity, even more violent than its anti-Semitism, reiterates the Nietzschean*

*notions of the "superman" and the interest in social Darwinism for power, conquest and survival of the fittest that can be found in the old National Socialist doctrine. From a social point of view, however, these practices represent the unlawful conduct of extremist sects that actively embrace their marginalization. Indeed, this self-conscious association of Nazism and sacrilege wants to be specifically for its devotees a way to highlight the profound wickedness of Nazism. When Satanist Nazis carry out their sinister rituals with references to Hitler, they embrace a dark desire for power and rehearse their murderous intent toward their enemies»<sup>14</sup>*

As an offshoot of the ONA, another controversial group took form: Temple 88. With this case, we are dealing with an unequivocally esoteric circle imbued to the bone with Nazism: Temple 88 celebrates National Socialism and in a certain way it institutionalizes it like a religion, bringing forth a doctrine that consists of guidelines, behavioural precepts, collective liturgies and celebratory rituals. An example can be offered by the extract of an "Aryan ceremony" to be performed on April 20, in memory of the birth of Adolf Hitler:

*«...an altar is placed in the centre of the area of celebration. On this altar (which should ideally be made of oak) is a portrait of the Chief, a copy of Mein Kampf, a display of seasonal flowers, a bell, and a large wooden chalice containing mead or red wine. Also at hand is a censer on which an incense of oak is to be burnt [...] All gather in a circle around the altar, and pass the chalice around. On receiving and drinking from the chalice, participants may opt to make a brief statement, or simply declare "Hail Hitler!". Once chalice is drained, a feast of celebration then follows»<sup>15</sup>.*

Among Temple 88's most peculiar documents there is a sort of ultra-conservative invective against rock music:

*«Aryanism completely rejects modern "rock" music. This music is fundamentally and irretrievably anti-Aryan. It encourages un-Aryan behaviour, and almost without exception its exponents are dedicated to the concept of a multi-racial society. There is not and never can be any such thing as an Aryan "rock" music - that is, a music which uses the techniques of "rock" music, its basic "beat" and rhythm, in an attempt to propound something Aryan. This is impossible, and cannot be done. It is impossible because the very basis of such "music" - the beat, the rhythm, the content - is anti-Aryan. What results from these attempts is still something alien and anti-Aryan [...] which distances them from their own culture, their own soul, their own heritage, their own destiny, their own instincts and feelings»<sup>16</sup>.*

It is not too difficult to find a number of similarities with what one of the founding fathers - like it or not - of the NSBM scene stated in the past. Of course, we are referring to the aforementioned Varg Vikernes. It is no coincidence that during the last years he spent in a Norwegian prison he renounced metal for the same reasons exposed

by Temple 88, that is, the obvious "Judeo-Negroid" influence (to use his own words) at the origin of rock music<sup>17</sup>. Many interpreted this statement as a joke. In fact, once his detention was over, Vikernes backtracked, releasing records that owed a lot to the black metal genre which made Burzum famous in the years prior to his conviction for murder.

Looking back to the ONA, we find the shadow of the swastika looms on the order because of David Wulstan Myatt's almost monopolizing figure. Although he denied on more than one occasion his direct involvement in the organization, his continuous presence is basically undeniable, as proven by the numerous writings he produced in favor of the Satanist group. The disputes that arose because of his almost certain membership in that occult enclave have never faded over the past two decades; in fact, over the years many have taken for granted that Myatt has always been in charge of everything, often hiding behind a plethora of pseudonyms. Here is how the English scholar Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke describes him:



*David Myatt, when he converted to Islam, also known as Abdul-Aziz ibn Myatt*

*«The main representative of Nazi Satanism in Britain is David William Myatt<sup>18</sup>, whose thought has exerted a major influence on this international cult [...] A long time devotee to extremism and Right-wing Satanism, David Myatt had begun to develop a "religion of National Socialism" in the early Nineties»<sup>19</sup>.*

It is worth the time to take an in-depth look into his life story, in order to understand the importance of his work and the influence of his activities on the NSBM scene.

Born in the Fifties, he spent much of his childhood and early adolescence between the Asian and African continents due to the work of his father. He returned to the motherland in 1967, and immediately joined the neo-Nazi movement, becoming a fervent militant. In the following years he would be involved in terrorist organizations on several occasions: Column 88 first and Combat 18<sup>20</sup> later. Because of his activities, he was arrested several times on charges of subversion of the public order. He would also found the National Socialist Movement, whose name made headlines when one of the members, David Copeland, was arrested following a series of gory bombings that took place in the British capital at the end of the Nineties.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE



Richard J. Moulton  
REICHSFOLK

Myatt's political resumé does not end here: his classic militant activity (although of a violent and clandestine nature) merged with an attitude of occult-mystical nature that pushed the English ideologue to embrace cryptic esoteric disciplines, as well as to formulate personal religious interpretations of his own political beliefs. It is therefore significant that he founded a movement like the Reichsfolk, a sort of neo-Nazi commune inspired by the principles of "blood and soil" inherited from the teachings of Richard Walther Darré<sup>21</sup>, Nazi Germany's Minister of Agriculture. This movement would be animated by a devotional charge that would constantly accompany his controversial itinerary<sup>22</sup>.

In Myatt's religion-based neo-Nazi vision there is a curious aspect that will later be picked up by some NSBM groups as well: the evolutionary concept of the "Homo Galactica", that is, the idea that the Aryan race could progress far beyond the simple domination of planet Earth, turning to deep space frontiers. It is no wonder that, among the seven foundational objectives of a new Hitlerian state, as enunciated by Myatt in his piece *The Enlightenment of National-Socialism*, the last step explicitly speaks of the need for exploration and conquest of the cosmos in a National Socialist perspective<sup>23</sup>.

A stance that is exposed in a comprehensive manner in a rare interview given in 1995 to *The Flaming Sword*, a newsletter distributed on a confidential basis to the members of the Black Order, in which Myatt, remembering his youth and his first encounter with the ideology of the swastika, exposed his conviction regarding the need to create a galactic empire as the ultimate manifestation of National Socialism<sup>24</sup>. Myatt will promote this idea on several occasions, focusing on the subject at every opportunity, and dedicating to it numerous writings including *Galactic Empire: National-Socialism, Civilization and the Conquest of the Final Frontier*.

## THE DIVINE REVELATION OF ADOLF HITLER



DAVID MYATT



The Black Order, the Ordo Sinistra Vivendi, the Order of Nine Angles, the Order of the Jarls of Bælde... all of these (and many other) groups and factions were devoted to a pagan revival according to the terms of an obscure dialectic as seen from a Western perspective. These groups contributed in defining that self-proclaimed *Occult-Fascist Axis* that was particularly in vogue at the end of the century. They served as an ideological tank, however modest for the number of fervent disciples, that was able to make itself known far and wide. Also appearing in numerous metal fanzines of that time, they left an indelible mark that can hardly go unnoticed. As Jeffrey Kaplan wrote in his *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*:

*«Much more could be written about these small but fascinating occult National Socialist groups. In terms of the dominant culture, they are and will remain marginal actors. However, within the cultic milieu, and in particular in the complex and often fratricidal world of National Socialism, they represent an important constituency which has, since the days of the Third Reich, staked a powerful claim for the soul of the movement»<sup>25</sup>.*

This lively alliance that arose in the Nineties among various initiatory orders, clandestine groups and occult circles, with an increasing resonance on an international level, witnessed the first and often frenzied opposition. Hand in hand with the spreading of the word about this axis devoted to "occult Fascism", the fronts of dissent multiplied, formed both by people from the outside (as it was quite expected), and insiders, often proclaimed Satanists who did not accept the Nazi drift advocated by this fresh horde of new necromancers in brown shirts.

Outside the actual underground circle, among the most tenacious detractors, there are several militant groups belonging to the American and Anglo-Saxon radical Right. These are people who adhere to ultra-conservative neo-Fascist/neo-Nazi movements, especially prone, at least in theory, to the triad "God, country and family" who look with

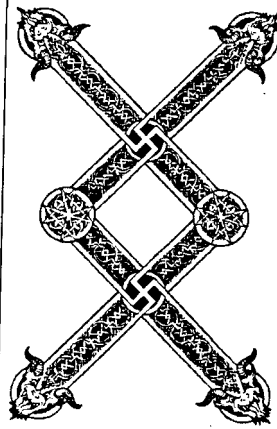
## The Occult-Fascist Axis



The Black Order  
of  
Pan-Europa

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Wellington Mail Centre  
New Zealand

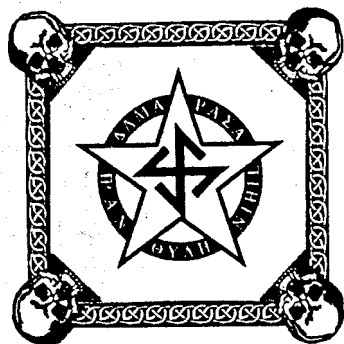
Wolf Against Sheep  
Quality Against Equality  
The Children of Sentries  
Primal Paganism  
Fierce Fascism  
The Final Religion  
The Church of War



*Manifesto of the Church of War, one of the many filiations of "esotericism" proliferating during the Nineties*

# SATANISM

and its allies



*The Nationalist Movement Under Attack*

alarmed concern at the spreading of these degenerate trends that mix traditional political figures with mystic cults and full-blown Satanism. With the precise intent to oppose all this, in 1998 the British neo-Fascist magazine *Final Conflict* published a full dossier whose purpose was to blatantly expose the attempt of certain occult groups to infiltrate the multifaceted Nationalist milieu: *Satanism and Its Allies - The Nationalist Movement Under Attack*, a peculiar accusatory document where it is stated in black and white that each true Nazi, Fascist or at least someone close to those ideologies, can only be first and foremost a Christian Nationalist and therefore free from any influence of satanic, Masonic, Zionist, Bolshevik and/or homosexual nature<sup>26</sup>.

In its one hundred pages, *Satanism and Its Allies* goes through, as if it was a black list, all the characters and the issues deemed harmful to the revolutionary cause. It begins with the famous "Great Beast", the English occultist Aleister Crowley, and continues with the esoteric scene during the Weimar Republic, then the Church of Satan, the Manson Family, the "Hollywood Nazi"-style jumble by James Mason (an American neo-Nazi militant famous for his deep devotion to both Adolf Hitler and Charles Manson) and much more... the list is quite long and consistent. There are even entire sections dedicated to the characters we have encountered so far, like David Myatt, Kerry Bolton, Stephen Cox, in addition to the whole parade of groups discussed above: the Order of Nine Angles, the Black Order, the Order of the Jarls of Bælde, the White Order of Thule, and so on. The words used to describe these characters and their communities are anything but nice, Myatt and Bolton in particular are grilled and pilloried because they are considered among the main causes of the satanic infiltration in the ranks of the revolutionary Nationalist organizations.



*Kerry Bolton (on the left) and Harri Baynes (with the chalice) engaged in a propitiatory ritual*



More or less halfway through the dossier, there is a chapter (*The Nationalist Music Scene - An Attempt to Influence Militants*) that explains the mistrust and conflicts of the time, which arose within the alternative musical scene - specifically, we refer to the RAC/skinhead environment, as opposed to the extreme metal scene of the late Nineties. At that time no one expected a crossover between the skinhead culture (firmly anchored to the Oi! genre) and the aggressive riffs of bands devoted to extreme metal.

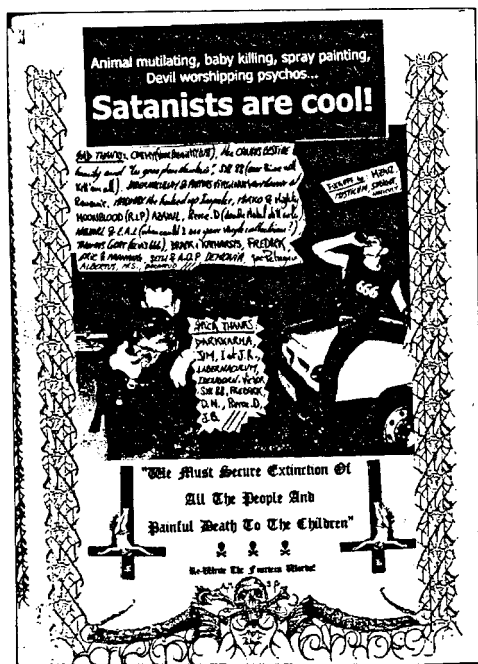
*«The importance of music to youth culture cannot be underestimated. There has probably never been a generation more influenced by musical trends - for good or ill - than this one. It is for this reason that nationalists around Europe have been putting a lot of effort into the music scene for the last fifteen years or so - and despite the ups and downs, it has borne a reasonable amount good fruit. So militants should not be surprised if they find that there are others out there intent on using the Nationalistic music scene to spread another message»<sup>27</sup>.*



*Propaganda poster of the Universal Order  
founded by James Mason*

Basically, for the authors of this pamphlet the only music genre that was suited to the Right-wing militants was traditional RAC (and its offshoots) as stated by the organization Blood & Honour. But despite the resistance of the most orthodox and uncompromising political environments, that see in extreme metal the equivalent of a pathogenic virus ready to tarnish and deface the moral rectitude of their militants, things were already changing and they were changing very quickly. There was an ongoing evolution/revolution that would soon see an inevitable - and highly profitable - contact phase and a sudden bastardization with surprising results. Later in this book we will describe the phenomenon and talk about activities such as the American neo-Nazi label/magazine Resistance, that during those same years began a personal campaign to promote ideologized black metal among the ranks of its supporters. That being said, it is fair to point out that even today, at the beginning of the new century, there is still (although it is now presented by a scattered minority) the same resistance that arose during the past century. Just read these lines taken from an article that appeared in the summer of 2011 in a newborn American newspaper of pro-white orientation titled Defiance:

«The images of bands adorned with swastikas, Celtic crosses (which – for one – is itself funny), covers full of Waffen SS soldiers, pictures of so-called Holocaust victims and provocative titles... Well, this all would be great... only if it were quite an oxymoron. Don't get me wrong – there is a National Socialism, there is a black metal genre. But despite many would be NSBM labels, covers, logos involved swastykas and Totenkopfs, sorry. Fantasies are one thing, reality and TRUTH the other. [...] and the truth is, nothing like National Socialist black metal can exist. And I think some of the thinking persons in that style were aware of that so they go by – more proper – names as pagan, Viking, folk or some other kind of metal. For National Socialism is defined by Adolf Hitler in Mein Kampf and there is definitely nothing about being National Socialist and evil Satan worshipper. [...] Sorry, nothing about Devil worship in the Third Reich. Quite the contrary, as it is known, Hitler got rid of the occult lodges and secret societies peddling Blavatsky's "esoteric" lore and other crap»<sup>28</sup>.



*An example of misinterpretation of the famous "14 Words" by David Lane from a "satanic metal" point of view: «We must secure extinction of all the people and painful death to the children»*

centralized, wherein Stratification take place via individual achievement rather than via selection from on high. [...] Authoritarians seeking comrades in an individualist movement like Satanism are really looking in the wrong place»<sup>29</sup>.

And if, as we just said, extreme metal has given rise to a mechanism of fierce criticism and rigid defensive positions by various radical political circles, even the satanic community of that time showed the same resentment towards those brothers accused of spreading the neo-Fascist/neo-Nazi virus in the Mephistophelean community:

«Modern Satanism is being increasingly infiltrated with the symbols, philosophy, and world-view of a specific political ideology: Fascism. I am not referring to cases in which "Fascist" is thrown at us as a slur (a standard rhetorical practice of the intellectually bankrupt Left), but rather to those in our own ranks who claim the term. [...] To me, the only truly Satanic social order is an Anarchist/libertarian one (the polar opposite of Fascism), wherein personal freedom is at a maximum and authority is dispersed and decentralized, wherein Stratification take place

This is just an excerpt from one of the many articles that fired up part of the Nineties giving rise to supporters and opponents of Fascist (and racist) attitudes within the satanic

belief system. Several articulate Q&As filled pages and pages of widely circulated magazines (such as *The Black Flame*, the Church of Satan's official bulletin), underground newsletters, metal fanzine and assorted occult and/or clandestine dispatches. These conflicts are still considered largely unresolved, partially mitigated only by a slow, yet unrelenting hybridization of ideologies and doctrines commonly considered borderline, that time has ultimately merged by smoothing over some mutual sharp edges.

Comrades devoted to Satanism or satanists devoted to camaraderie? Neither option can be considered as actually winning, much less definitive. The fact is that both have seen the rise of currents of thought that have found fertile ground among the ranks of the NSBM scene. Only at the dawn of the third millennium will new groups and new lifeblood produce a considerable evolution of the species, reshaping the National Socialist black metal scene in a grouping ready to disown "evil" uncertainties and ingenuities on the basis of a much more organic, and at the same time articulated, vision. A *Weltanschauung* with a pagan imprint, tenaciously anchored to the myth of the blood and to the ancestral worship of an alleged Aryan legacy.

## Notes:

1 - L. Spence, *The Occult Causes of the Present War*, Rider e Co., Londra 1940.

2 - It is enough to leaf through some sections of the book to understand Spence's leitmotiv: *The Satanic Element in Nazism, Devil-worshippers in Berlin, The Satanic Power in Modern Germany, Rosenberg's Blasphemous Satanism, Nazism and Satanism*, and so on.

3 - N. Goodrick-Clarke, *The Occult Roots of Nazism: Secret Aryan Cults And Their Influence on Nazi Ideology*, Tauris Parke, 2004.

4 - D. Caasy, *La distruzione del mondo? Hitler prepara...*, Edizioni Roes, Roma 1948.

5 - Ibid.

6 - Der Stürmer, from *Dark Moon* n.9, March 2007.

7 - It is necessary to note how the black metal scene, and in particular the NSBM one, have never been nice to LaVey, rejecting on several occasions the doctrine of his organization (considered as yet another expression of a degraded Americanism) and especially picking on the overt Jewish ancestry of its founder. Just read as an example some statements of ideologized black metal bands:

«I think that the Church of Satan lacks insight in racial matters. It is an American "institution", and as we all know, the United States are a mixture of many races. And I do not like that American bastard-race ideology in my people. We are pure people with pure archetypes and with our own archetypal ideology. Anton LaVey's ideology has certain Jewish elements which are contradictive to ours» (Varg Vikernes, from *The Burning Ground* n.2, 1994).

«Personally I see Satanism (especially the American offshoots as the Church of Satan) as another part of judaism since its fundamental principles are based on the lies, misunderstandings and ridicules of the various pantheons that the jews came across» (Der Stürmer, from *Dark Moon* n.9, March 2007).

«I do not like the Judeo-Christian concept of Satan. I do not accept a jew god and therefore I do not accept his antagonist, Satan. I am totally against the monotheistic Judeo-Christian concept. Our mythology, cosmotheory and Aryan philosophies are filled with the grace of the gods and archetypes of man/nature, and they embrace the spirituality of the superman! What do we need these Jewish creations for? There are also people who identify themselves as Satanists

## SATAN-JUGEND

and purely follow Nietzsche's philosophy. All the pagan traditions were also identified by their oppressors as "evil cults" making the situation and distinctions more confusing and complex. One thing I often see is the comparison between Lucifer/Satan and the mythological greek Prometheus. There are some common traits, that is true, but why does it have to be interpreted in a Jewish way rather than considering it a Hellenic deity?» (Darkthule, from Exoteric 1, 2009).

8 - Between the pages of *The Heretic* all the themes of political and occult nature that are relevant to Bolton's inquiry will find plenty of room and will undergo an in-depth analysis, as he recalls in an interview given at the end of the Nineties:

«Over the past ten years I have been publishing material of political and esoteric natures [...] generally material of a heretical nature and somehow challenges the status quo. Material on Fascism and National Socialism, paganism, cyclic history, and Evola, Nietzsche, Madole, Yockey, et al.» *A Struggle Against Life's Stupidity and Its Cowardice*, from Scapegoat n.12, 1999.

9 - *The Black Order Constitution*, from Erda n.1, 1996.

10 - Please refer to *A Struggle Against Life's Stupidity and Its Cowardice*, from Scapegoat n.12, 1999.

11 - Christos Beest, interviewed by Gavin Baddeley in *Lucifer Rising – Sin, Devil Worship and Rock'n'Roll*, Plexus, London 1999.

12 - Ibid.

13 - Ibid.

14 - N. Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity*, New York University Press, 2002.

15 - Excerpt from Temple 88's ceremonial document titled *April 20<sup>th</sup> Mass of Rejoicing*.

16 - Excerpt from Temple 88's document titled *Drugs, Alcohol-Abuse and "Rock" Music – An Aryanist Perspective*.

17 - V. Vikernes, from Ablaze n.9, 2005.

18 - Although some researchers, such as Goodrick-Clarke himself, wrote about David "William" Myatt, there is no certainty as to the veracity of that middle-name, while there are also several documents produced by Myatt (such as some collections of his poems from the Seventies) which are signed as David Wulstan Myatt.

19 - N. Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism, and the Politics of Identity*, New York University Press, 2002.

20 - Combat 18, founded by Paul David "Charlie" Sargent in 1992 (and, as a result of internal struggles, led by Will Browning), was initially born as an offshoot of the British National Party with the aim of providing security during the BNP demonstrations. The C18 (the acronym by which it is usually known) rapidly evolved into a sort of armed wing of the extreme Right: far from any political issues and more oriented to a massive presence on the streets, it gathered its members among the most aggressive activists and the hooligan milieu. Over the years the C18 has established itself internationally by opening branches in many nations, while always maintaining close ties of cooperation with the Blood & Honour network to which it is generally associated.

21 - Richard Walther Darré, born in Argentina in 1895 into a family of German origin, completed his studies in Germany, obtaining a degree in agriculture. He came into contact with the rising Nazi Party and then became its Minister for Agriculture. In his most famous work, published in 1929 with the title *Neuadel aus Blut und Boden* ("The new nobility of blood and soil"), Walther Darré gave complete form to his thought and laid the theoretical foundations for a great project to reform the German rural system. Rejecting liberalism, Darré's vision identified the peasantry as the guardian of ethical virtues to be passed on, in order to operate a «recovery

of the sacred mystical of the organic communion between the hereditary racial lineage and the soil as a place of transmission of the original memory of the ancestors of the race» (From the introduction by Maurizio Rossi to the reprint of *La Nuova Nobiltà di Sangue e Suolo* - The New Nobility of Blood and Soil -, Edizioni Ritter, Milan 2010).

22 - In the years to follow, he will have the opportunity to disown his past, also converting to Islam (under the name of Abdul-Aziz ibn Myatt) only to end up firmly detaching himself from any form of extremism in favor of a new personal doctrine called "The Numinous Way".

23 - D. Myatt, *The Enlightenment of National Socialism*, 1995.

24 - «When I first learned of the existence of National Socialist Germany, at the age of fifteen, I knew intuitively that here was the type of society that was needed – or at least a prototype for it. And it was this knowledge, and my understanding of National Socialism, which above anything else inspired me to become active in politics and forsake my dream of becoming a physicist and finding some means to travel between the stars. I wanted and yearned to create the only type of society which could make this noble and glorious destiny real. To me, the exploration and conquest of outer space – the creation of a galactic empire – is the ultimate practical expression of National Socialism» D. Myatt, from *The Flaming Sword* n.6, May 1995.

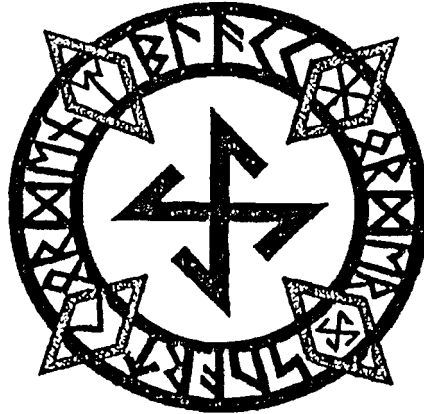
25 - J. Kaplan, *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*, AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek 2002.

26 - AA.VV., *Satanism and Its Allies – The Nationalist Movement Under Attack*, 1998.

27 - Ibid.

28 - Anonymous, *National Socialist Black Metal – Just What the Hell Has National Socialism in Common with Satanism?*, from *Defiance* n.1, July 2011.

29 - J. Deboo, *Fascism and the Deity of Rebellion*, from *The Black Flame* n.1-2, 1994.



# An overview on men and the esoteric symbols of Nazism

«ANYONE WHO THINKS THAT NATIONAL SOCIALISM IS MERELY A POLITICAL MOVEMENT HAS NOT UNDERSTOOD ANYTHING»

[ADOLF HITLER]

One only needs to look at the artwork of any NSBM record to find themselves in front of a representation of all the iconographic underworld that links Hitler's political movement to dark and occult plots, magical and mystical at the same time: symbols, quotes, colors and emblems which, although reworked, betray the inextricable link there is between this fringe of black metal and the esoteric caliber attributed to the Third Reich. Not that this is an exclusive prerogative of NS metal (just think of the use of a particular aesthetic in the industrial and neofolk scenes), but here there is certainly a dominance of a highly explicit nature: a good NSBM job cannot do without its ration of visual propaganda. Therefore there is an outburst of "skulls" (the Totenkopf, a famous mark placed on the caps of the SS units), runic alphabets and countless variations of the swastika, of which the preferred replacement remains the

Schwarze Sonne (the "black sun", depicted as a wheel composed of twelve lightning bolts).

The sources from which to draw in order to better understand this peculiar form of Indo-Germanic sacredness lead us to characters like the ariosoph Guido von List and his book *The Secret of the Runes*, or the former Cistercian monk Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels and the unique racial theories expressed in his bulky *Theozoology*. We are at the dawn of the twentieth century, against the backdrop of the disasters left by the First World War, while the activities of occult lodges of a nationalist nature such as the Thule Society (Thule-Gesellschaft), whose work will consistently shape the embryonic nucleus of the Nazi Party, thrive behind the scenes.

In January 1933, with the rise to power of Hitler's movement, certain occult ambitions seemed



to suddenly withdraw. In fact, if on one hand the new regime did not seem to tolerate the presence of hidden groups devoted to esoteric practices, on the other, under the auspices of leaders such as the Reichsführer of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, there were many initiatives with the purpose to explore the ideal of a mystical and pagan pan-Germanism. And this is where a key character comes into play, who is relevant to the doctrines coveted by the supreme commander of the Schutzstaffel: the Viennese occultist Karl Maria Wiligut. Nicknamed "Himmler's Rasputin", this actual hierophant who established himself at the court of the Party will contribute substantially to the magical aspect of the movement; it is to him that we owe the creation of one of the most important awards of the Reich, the Totenkopfring (the "ring of Honor", with skull and crossbones and sacred symbols related to the mystical tradition of the German people).

The place appointed to guard the rings of all the soldiers who died, retired or were killed in battle was the castle of Wewelsburg, located in Westphalia, in the district of Paderborn. A fortress dating back to the seventeenth century and with a rather troubled history that, on the advice of Wiligut himself, was to be taken over by Himmler in the Thirties in order to be turned into a school for Nazi leaders. The interventions carried out on the structure, especially on the north tower, will identify it as a sacred building for the performance of rites and ceremonies of which nowadays we only have fragmentary - and often contradictory - evidence. There are countless NSBM records whose artworks boast images of the castle, especially shots of the aforementioned north tower, its crypt (also called Walhalla), which at the ground floor hosts the Obergruppenführersaal (the "hall of the commanders", commonly known as the "hall of columns", where to this day stands a mosaic depicting the Schwarze Sonne).

Despite the defeat in the spring of 1945, the post-war offers loyalists of the Axis a new fertile ground for spreading more doctrines ready to turn National Socialism into a religion of atavistic inspiration, a catechesis which locates in the movement all the signs of a messianic cult ready to re-emerge. Among the most relevant interpreters of the mystical nature of the Third Reich we find the names of Savitri Devi, Miguel Serrano and Julius Evola, although the latter was an independent thinker who embraced Fascism and Nazism only by virtue of their adherence to certain principles of Tradition, theorizing a spiritual racism that is different from the one based on genetics that is carried out by National Socialism



*The homage in music to the philosopher Julius Evola released by the Polish label Homo Superior (2009)*

- discrepancies that did not fail to cause him frictions with the regime, so as to make him the subject of constant surveillance. Given the elitism of his writings and the rather cryptic philosophical approach, Evola will not enjoy some of the abundant honors reserved instead to Savitri Devi and Serrano in the NSBM community.

The first, a Euro-Indian writer of fanatical Nazi faith, will be the author of some of the most important books for the so-called "esoteric Hitlerism": first and foremost *The Lightning*

and the Sun, a work originally published in Calcutta in 1958. This book coined the idea of Adolf Hitler as an "avatar", that is, one of the many incarnations of the Vedic deity Vishnu. The bestowing of otherworldly qualities to the German Führer will be taken up and further developed by her Chilean friend Miguel Serrano. The son of an important aristocratic family of Spanish origin, his adventurous life, among Antarctic explorations and diplomatic missions on behalf of his country, will lead him around the world, and in his books there will be a curious syncretism between oriental traditions and a persistent reminder of the Nordic myth.

It is on the basis of these elements that esoteric Hitlerism takes shape, claimed (with more or less awareness) by the majority of supporters of the NSBM scene: an unconventional as well as flawed eschatology that the Nazi black metal scene has decided to adopt, without asking too many questions, as a cold weapon against all monotheisms, a dogma to be used as a ferocious banner of revolt in defiance of the modern world.





Interview with:

## Nrishinga Deva Das

**S**ince the first half of the Nineties, Brother Nrishinga Deva Das has been a part of the community network of groups such as the Ordo Sinistra Vivendi and the Black Order. Taking advantage of his personal wealth of experience, we asked him to share some of his memories, taking into account the privileged point of view from which he could witness the development, spreading and subsequent decay of these unique organizations.

**Ordo Sinistra Vivendi, Order of the Jarls of Bælder, The Black Order, Order of Nine Angles... many "orders", sometimes linked by almost incestuous relations of consonance. The Nineties were a particularly euphoric time for the esoteric underground, can you offer your testimony about what you experienced firsthand?**

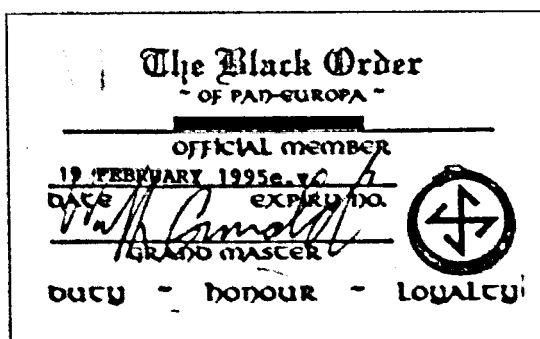
**How did you enter this fringe of the underground esoterrorism?**

Oh yes, those were the good old days. There was no Internet, communications were not "fast food" as they are today, and yet you could build strong and lasting relationships with people who, although quite strange, you felt close to, even if they were different from you. The mere fact of having common interests for certain hidden realities gave you energy and reinforced your enthusiasm, which you often had to live privately, especially if you were completely isolated in your interests. My first contacts with that world occurred through some peers, souls with the same obsessions and compulsions towards some non-ordinary aspects of existence, of which the official culture gave only morbid hints, criminal decontextualizations and/or approved versions, distorted by the filters of modernity. I was not looking to become part of a group or perform special rituals, I was consumed by a hunger for knowledge that was impossible to satisfy in an easy manner, unless I tied myself to questionable characters that often ended up in the papers for mere sensationalism or alleged crimes, or because they were associated with ideologies that in those days were very far from mine. My main interest at that time was for all the expressions of Indoeuropean culture/essence/form related to Origin and Tradition in a non-dogmatic



way, but which acknowledged in certain signs and forms of feeling some very different forces from those brought to Europe by importers of cheap exoticism, and the New Age bandwagon. New Age, while appealing to a human dimension apparently far from that of the modern man, sold at a high price a semi-knowledge turning everything into a global non-religion, perfect to complement the other tentacles of globalization, a term which was then used with a very different connotation than today.

The Order of the Jarls of Bælder's great pride was a huge archive that almost resembled the library of Alexandria, in the days when you had to sweat blood in order to find information, rare books and ideas for knowledge that were relegated to the few. I personally did not start from scratch, but it seemed to me the most direct way to explore themes related to Norse mythology, that were previously limited to just a few books. The first translations of Von List, as well as the access to hundreds of other books on different topics - not always from verifiable sources, alas - provided food for the mind in order to satisfy many cravings limited by economic and editorial barriers. Contact with other groups came naturally: although I never considered myself a Satanist or a National Socialist, their publications were a source of additional knowledge and information, and certainly gave the stimuli that could not otherwise be found in the publications of other groups whose work was limited to self-promotion and arguments with Christianity. In



*Membership card of the Black Order belonging to Brother Nrisinga Deva Das*

those years, thanks to these groups I managed to get in touch with hundreds of interesting characters who, like myself, followed the path of research and knowledge with no interest in affiliations with conventicles. I was more of a user than a member, although I was active in terms of networking, exchange and research within the most interesting circles, also brushing against many others, collecting, learning, hanging out

with and meeting great individuals with whom I am still in touch today. But I have not had contacts with the ONA, about which there were already disreputable rumors back then, that later proved to be correct, after the David Copeland case and Myatt's conversion to even more questionable spiritual expressions.

Judging by the presence of metal bands (at that time many of them were still newcomers), this scene seems to have acted as a real training ground in terms of subject matter and attitude. And this is especially true if we talk about paganism and a certain westernized Satanism...

There was a lot of activity and, as I said, these organizations were a rare example of pre-Internet socialization and availability of information that was impossible to find elsewhere, especially for those who were genuinely interested in certain subjects that were

out of reach or distorted by the New Age commercialization (the bio-pagan counterpart of Catholic universalism and turbocapitalist globalization, which assimilates and evens out everything). There was a lot of exchange of information, true friendship and collaborations/hospitality. I think, however, that most of the bands involved lost interest after the first few years: excluding some names which continued until the end of the parable of these organizations, they have all moved to something else as soon as the first political symbols made an appearance, and trends changed. I remember people like In the Woods, Mortis, Spear of Longinus, Unholy or the guy from Hammerheart. And others who years later have become known in other genres, addressing completely different issues.

**In your opinion, what were the strengths and weaknesses of such organizations?**

Regarding the strengths of the realities that I have personally known, I can definitely say being guided by individuals who were able to confront others on multiple levels, and although they were leaders, they did not act as such, even when they were dealing with teenagers. They spoke to them as adults and listened carefully when others had something to say, without necessarily wanting to "manipulate" or persuade. They managed to be attentive to underground trends and not just those, communicating with different realities and artists, even when they were not in line with what was of interest for their organizations. There was not the "love bombing" that you find in many sects, nor the destructive ego crushing of many groups that ended up in the limelight. Regarding the negative aspects: in addition to some questionable news events, the change of leadership in some of the groups I was in contact with has made them extremely superficial. Certainly the weakness consisted in the presence of seriously disconcerting individuals, with bad contacts within the Intelligentsia, in addition to surrendering too often to certain *weirdism* inherited from questionable characters à la Miguel Serrano, distracting them from reality and replacing a healthy Nietzschean "superhumanism" with frozen brains, submarines, hollow earth and UFOs. With the exception of Bolton's writings, too much space was given to non-political issues, giving credit to modern Rasputins



**Ordo Sinistra Vivendi**

World Headquarters  
PO Box 83 - Pachelarini - Wellington - New Zealand

**ENTRANCE EXAMINATION**

Please print clearly or type, on one side of paper only.

The text used is *Sinistra Vivendi*, supplied with this paper.

**PART I**

**Self Initiation Rite**

Erect an altar and obtain working tools, etc. Adapt the initiation rite appearing on page 13 of *Sinistra Vivendi*, and perform a self-initiation.

1. Provide a full working record of your rite, including whatever emotions, etc. were felt.

**Sinistra Vivendi (pages 1-3)**

1. Where does the name "Satan" come from?
2. What does the O.S.V. symbol stand for?
3. What does Satanism view man as being?
4. From whence does the Satanist's code of living derive?
5. Define Right Hand and Left Hand paths.
6. Describe the principle of polarity.
7. Define "Satanism".

**Friedrich Nietzsche - Satan's Hammer (pages 4-5)**

1. How can it be said that Nietzsche is a "satanic philosopher"?
2. What do both LaVey and Nietzsche teach about the herd?
3. According to Nietzsche, every individual represents one of two aspects of life. Name the two.
4. In Nietzschean philosophy the superior individual - Higher Man - is the transitional type between what two extremes of life?
5. What shall be the "mission" of the new nobility, according to Nietzsche?
6. What advice does Nietzsche give to Higher Man?
7. Why does Nietzsche condemn pity?
8. What are the two opposing moralities?

**The Coming God Race (pages 6-7)**

1. What attitude does the Satanist have towards capitalism?
2. What do LaVey, Nietzsche and Crowley all advocate in terms of population policy?
3. Define eugenics.
4. What is the Pandell thesis on the collapse of civilizations?

**The Faustian Soul (pages 8-9)**

1. Who was Dr Faust?
2. What motivated Faust to seek a pact with the Devil?
3. What term succinctly defines "Faustian"?

*An excerpt of the admission test to join the  
Ordo Sinistra Vivendi*

who would make teens in search of thrills wet their pants; but they fled as soon as their children actually planted bombs, indiscriminately hitting passers-by. They basically threw hand grenades and ran away, only to reappear converted to Islam by virtue of a debatable evolution. There was no effective control on the members, it was enough to introduce oneself and pay a fee to have access to sensitive documentation, complete with addresses that can still be found on-line, jeopardizing the members and the organizations themselves.

**So, entry to the orders was granted by simple membership. But how were they organized within? Was there a hierarchy they respected, rites of initiation or of passage?**

It was common practice to introduce oneself with an introductory "essay" and pay a small fee. Then a regular mailing of material would follow, as well as access to more or less thorough "educational" material.

In some circles, however, you could only have access by intermediation of people who were already part of the group, according to the classic European tradition of initiation. What then happened behind closed doors, either can not be known, or it can easily be found on the Internet with a little research. I've always wondered on which terms some of these circles chose their members. Giving away sensitive documentation, which easily speaks about the physical elimination of other people, in exchange for a few pounds has always led me to consider some organizations as mere agents provocateurs of the system. And such fears, were confirmed by news reports and statements by informers or not very bright members of this milieu.

Some groups called for formal initiations, with others it could be done "remotely", with rituals of self-initiation: a sort of DIY baptism. There were these international ceremonies, in which the members organized themselves to celebrate in sync across the world the same event, with a peculiar interpretation of the time zones. I was offered to take part in liturgies that included nudity and orgiastic practices, but when I asked if the fair sex would also participate, the organizers vaguely replied with: *"Let's see, we could invite someone for the occasion..."*. Homosexuality was omnipresent in several of these circles, although disguised as a *Wandervogel* revival, naturism, etc... And I admit that even at the time it left me quite stunned.

**When, how and to what extent did politics become part of these orders? Do you think it had a major role in defining their direction in the following years?**

Politics is the most powerful and pervasive form of art, it must have rhythm, shape, content and a capacity for abstraction given by strokes of genius. An attitude that is almost completely lost in the modern world, where those who understand or express something solid are too refined to take root in a reality where squalor prevails and where the economy trumps politics and man himself.

I admit that, although at one point there was a radicalization of some of these groups, politics with a capital "P" was hardly present. The use of certain symbols, more or less veiled references to anti-Semitism often associated with Christianity and/or banks (rather than explicitly racial issues), was not very thorough. Communism was often adversed

for the same reasons of any WASP (white anglo-saxon protestant) bigot.

Excluding Kerry Bolton, who is still active and constantly published political pamphlets with detailed analysis and research, that are still valid, on international finance and so on, generally the arguments were limited to a "positive" identitarianism, attention to ecology and similar contexts. There were points of reference with individuals and very valid publications, such as *The Scorpion*, *Kshatriya* or *Ionia*, but generally there wasn't a real in-depth analysis on economic and social themes, and all the mechanisms that allow a society to be called such. Probably it was not even their task, as they mainly focused on spirit, identity and a place in the cosmos.

With the intensification of the presence of certain images and symbols I saw several people leave, and many others approaching, unfortunately because of the usual obnoxious juvenile rebellion that goes crazy with strong images. Personally, I was not interested in those aspects. I am not part of any group, but an ideology becomes like a pair of comfy slippers if you do not participate, do not act, do not organize and especially do not try to have an impact on real life.

**When and how did you distance yourself from this scene? Was there perhaps a trigger, or did everything just deteriorate over time?**

Surely, with the arrival of the Internet the initial stimulus has faded, namely the search for relevant documentation. Although the input was huge, it was quite unidirectional. Reading writings filtered by "believers", often lacking the essential anthropological and philological ingredients, was a matter of pure faith, and in my path the concept of "faith" was subordinate to that of "feeling", a useless feeling unless it is contextualized in an in-depth study of the Origin, of the Tradition of any expression that might interest me. Unfortunately, much of the literature stopped at the interpretations - fascinating in their form, but all too often inaccurate and questionable - of the Thirties. Without context, there was very little to actually cling to. A mistake that was not made by more thorough names such as Schuon, Guénon or Evola, whose works span to 360 degrees and make any Original tension contemporary. Let me stress that I do not reject everything, but when you're evolving and you no longer get answers it is time to go further. In some of the groups there were questionable characters who behaved as clowns, mixing pro-drug propaganda and marketing it as "tradition" to a bucolic Nazism made of hallucinogenic mushrooms, ridiculous artistic expressions and reworkings of a lame ideology entirely made

## National Socialism and Satanism

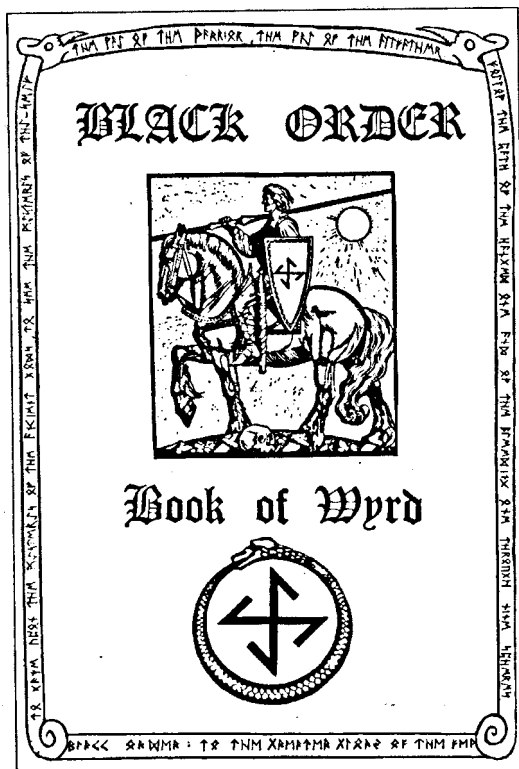


Letter to a National Socialist

The Black Order  
of  
Pan-Europa



P.O. Box 38-262  
Wellington Mail Centre  
New Zealand



*Cover of the Book of Wyrd (1993).  
Fundamental document that collects the rituals of the  
Black Order. Originally reserved to its member and later  
declassified making it available to the general public*

of image and occultism, devoid of any political inspiration. Although, as I said, I have never called myself "NS", coming from environments where you eat bread and politics, seeing certain symbols associated to a juvenile rebellion for its own sake, without a minimum of meaningful reasoning that sinks into reality, reminded me a lot of the nerd kids completely lost in Role Playing Games. You can not aim for the stars and the cosmos if you do not have your feet planted on the ground. Fiction is beautiful, but it has no impact on reality, especially if you are lacking the fundamentals of traditional knowledge. Also, I did not want to have anything to do with people linked to organizations that boasted human sacrifices and a sinister behavior, who would soon become prophets of a so-called Islam after years of Satanism, or with others like Richard Moulton who, having failed as satanic painters, have recycled themselves as pseudo-christian minstrels. I

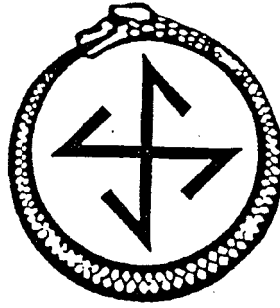
look at everything that comes from the Anglo-Saxon world with suspicion, especially those who talk big and then operate momentous changes and turns. I totally respect Stephen Cox, Kerry Bolton, and other people with whom I had a relationship of respect and friendship, so my experience in those years was very good, also because I was always myself, without feigning myself a warrior of the race or a magus reincarnating some kind of guru. I was able to communicate and learn a lot, without the ignorance and arrogance of other mystical circles run by problematic characters, often middle-class sons of the bourgeoisie who, just like their peers who supported humanitarian political causes, were divided between boredom and sense of guilt for their state of too-human human beings with a full wallet, mistreated by everyday reality. It is also worth mentioning the many ambiguities of some members: the already mentioned bizarre situations with homosexual undertones, and a nod at some New Age or Masonic themes, light years away from the way I see the position of the Indoeuropean man in the cosmos.

**In the wake of a renewed interest in spirituality, the end of the previous millennium was a golden time for covens, circles and esoteric orders that were born and developed**

in a short time. To date, what is your opinion on that period? According to you, would it be possible to repeat such experiences?

That time has been very positive for myself. I have gained knowledge that otherwise I would not have been able to find, even today that everything is ready at hand, with the risk of getting lost on the way. It was a good journey because it had a beginning and an end, and a large part of what I encountered along the way meant a lot to me as an individual and for my work. I have seen the rise and fall of groups and other situations, perhaps overwhelmed by the constant superficiality given by an excessive communication which automatically leads the explorer to decreasing his healthy curiosity, spoiling the experience of true growth that you can only have when you are looking for a path that is truly yours.

Apart from the shadows and ambiguities that I have already mentioned, for me and others those were extremely positive years that led to the creation of so many things, clarifying once and for all that certain symbols and archetypes are timeless and can still speak to individuals and to the masses. Sure, I think there is still room for such organizations, if only they learned to remain clean and clear, without degenerating into sects and applying a real selection of the individuals involved, throwing into the fire false prophets and dubious people. The strength of those circles laid in the fact that they catered to hungry youngsters with a special sensitivity. I am sure there are still hearts that are greedy of knowledge, but I wonder who will be able to retrace some paths in a lucid and coherent manner. Surely there is already someone who is working without the need for a spotlight. I wish them luck.

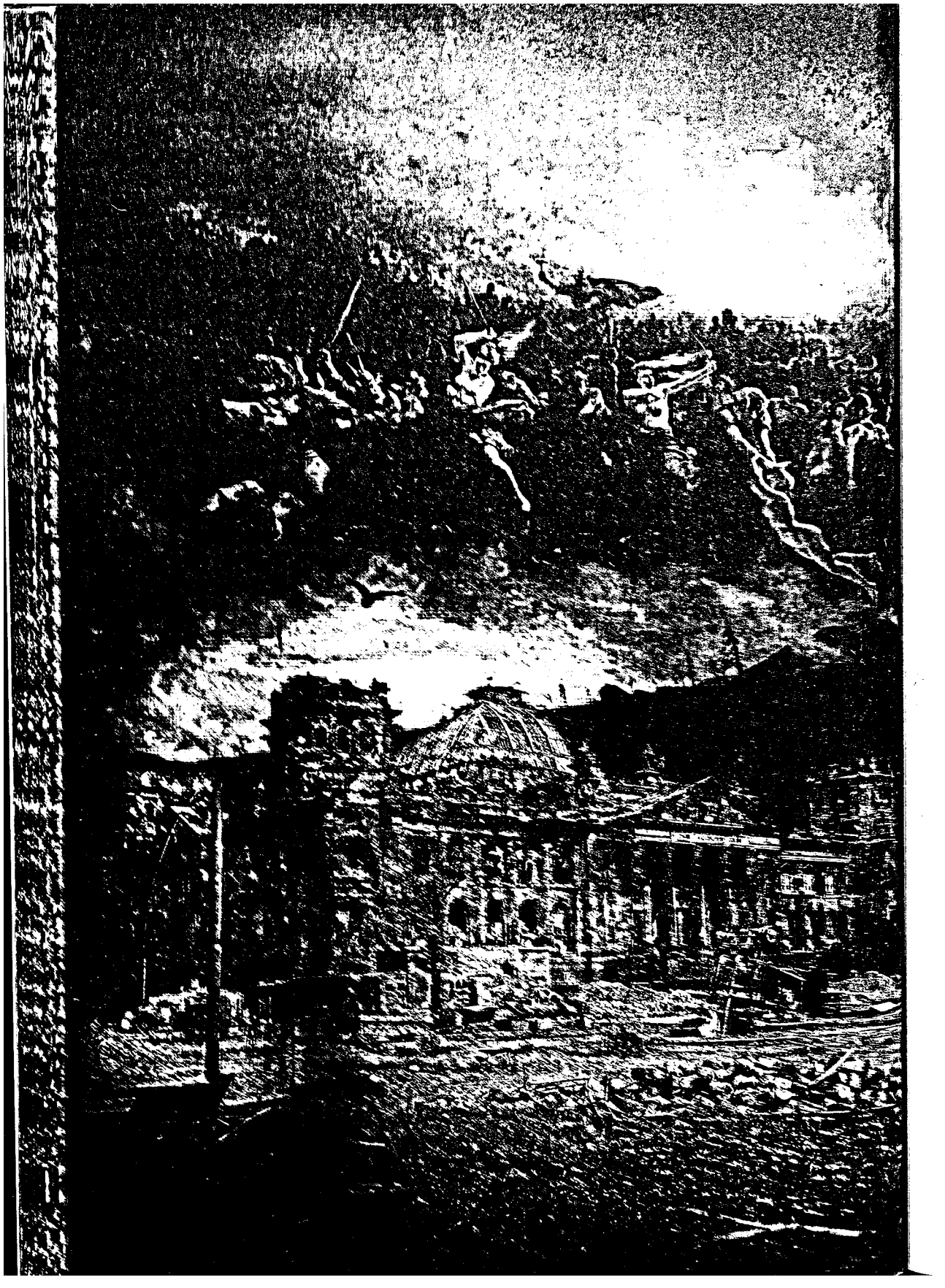


## THE BLACK ORDER

The Black Order is an esoteric body of men and women established to presence the "dark" or "Shadow" side of the European unconscious.

If you are at least 18 and interested in the pagan folkways of the European peoples and you are interested in the possibility of joining The Black Order, send a 500-word autobiography, including your views on politics, culture and history.

If deemed suitable, you will be sent an application and introduction brochure.





# Into the Wolf's Den

## Absurd and "Germany Year Zero"

*«WOTAN IN REALITY NEVER DIED, BUT HAS RETAINED HIS ORIGINAL VITALITY AND AUTONOMY. OUR CONSCIOUSNESS ONLY IMAGINES THAT IT HAS LOST ITS GODS; IN REALITY, THEY ARE STILL THERE AND IT ONLY NEEDS A CERTAIN GENERAL CONDITION IN ORDER TO BRING THEM BACK IN FULL FORCE»<sup>1</sup>*

[CARL GUSTAV JUNG]

«**6**ermany, the land where the National Socialism was born, where vision of honour and pride were born which are still in our hearts, burning like a fire»<sup>2</sup>: it is with these words that the short report on the state of the German NSBM scene published in the fourth issue of the Greek fanzine Wallachian Tyrant begins, and following a fallacious logic one could understand that if Germany was the birthplace of the National Socialist ideology, then over there NSBM can only be a healthy phenomenon, widely spread in the sixteen Länder that constitute the Federal Republic. In truth, things are not exactly like that, and for several reasons.

First because, as we have already explained, NSBM is a genre with a very quick cycle of birth-development-death. The bands that, in one way or another, have acquired a status of relevance did so not only because of their artistic skills, but also as a result of a natural selection that makes a clean sweep of the competition. The nature of these productions, which is inevitably underground, must also be taken into account: apart from distribution through official channels, whose turnover is limited anyway, many records see the light as private editions with negligible print runs, sometimes even less than 50 copies, which makes them totally irrelevant in the context of the music business. This condition is not just a figment of the lyrical-musical fundamentalism that characterizes the genre, but also - and this is especially true in Germany - the result of a legislation in its history and the tragic events concerning the Third Reich (and everything resulting from it or that can be traced back to it) that is not at all simple: in the German Criminal Code there are some sections, in particular provision §86a, which regulate in a very severe manner the abuse, distribution and public use of symbols belonging to non-constitutional associations. These standards obviously cover all the iconography derived from Nazism or that refers to any such post-conflict organizations, as it is forbidden to use runes or symbols that identify even contemporary realities like Blood & Honour.

Germany is also equipped with a supervisory body appointed to evaluate the contents and possibly approve/suspend distribution of any media (music, video

games, movies, books) potentially harmful to minors. This government agency called Bundesprüfstelle jugendgefährdende für Medien ("Federal Department for the media harmful to young people") has been active since 1954, and it has been accused of exercising a form of *de facto* censorship, limiting the freedom of speech of individuals. Over the years, the activity of the BPjM has had a profound impact on the circulation of certain products deemed harmful. For example, the banning of the famous video game *Wolfenstein 3D* by ID Software made the headlines; stigmatized because of its use of Nazi iconography - in spite of the storyline where the Nazis were enemies to defeat - in sharp contrast with subsection §86a mentioned above. Also the BPjM has intervened several times to stop the distribution of certain record productions considered unfit for the public, and not only because of prohibited symbols: the death metal/splatter band Cannibal Corpse was banned for a good 14 years, with a ban on selling or even showing the first three albums in public - a measure thankfully lifted in 2006. There are many records by NSBM bands, or recognized as such, that have suffered the same fate: Absurd, Graveland or Sigrblot are just some of the big names whose works were banned.

If NSBM does not have an easy time navigating through the maze of legislature, there is also a marketing aspect that needs to be considered. Germany is one of the biggest world markets as far as heavy metal is concerned, home to two real giants of the independent music industry (ie. Nuclear Blast and Century Media) and produces a vast amount of titles ranging from black to power metal, as well as gothic and death, and any other possible variation of the genre. The offering is definitely rich and varied for fans of extreme metal, and it is equally clear that the majority of the fans do not consider it necessary to dig in the murkiest underground to find projects worth a listen. Not to mention that, obviously, the ideology can act as a catalyst for some, but also as a deterrent for others. Needless to say, the above mentioned labels - for lack of interest, if not for political orientation or simple marketing choice - keep NSBM at arm's length, or openly condemn it.

A direct consequence of the exile from the recording industry imposed by the labels is, predictably, the total exclusion from any official live event, with the banning of not only the incriminated bands, but also their t-shirts, logos, and patches. It is not uncommon, in fact, to find an actual *Verbotsliste* at the entrance to the concert area of everything that you cannot wear, as happened at the Ragnarök Festival in 2012, where participants were asked not to show up wearing merchandise of bands like Absurd, Ad Hominem, Graveland, Nokturnal Mortum, Satanic Warmaster, Temnozor, Wolfnacht, Der Stürmer or the fearsome Landser<sup>3</sup>. To the almost total impossibility of playing live, the German NSBM circuit responded with the strategic organization of several "private events", an expedient put in place in order to circumvent the stringent regulations on public performances within Germany.

Finally, the exclusion from the common channels of record promotion joins the boycotting operated by the music magazines. The German metal scene can indeed

boast numerous specialized publications, bought and followed by thousands of readers. Magazines can be trendsetting, turning the spotlight on and steering the readers' interest towards a particular record, or they can condemn it to oblivion. NSBM is not only banned from these magazines, but it has also been the center of inquiry articles with less than enthusiastic tones<sup>4</sup>.

To sum it up, in what would be its "homeland", NSBM exists in a predictable dimension of total obscurity, finding itself on the fringes of any marketing mechanism. But nonetheless, Germany is still a mandatory stop for our investigation: not only because it is the nerve center of the ideology that spread like a viral epidemic instead of disappearing at the end of the war, but also for the presence of a band that helped lay the foundations of National Socialist black metal, and whose work simply cannot be ignored when addressing the topic. The name in question is very well known to followers of extreme Right metal as well as black metal *tout court*: Absurd.



Originating from Sondershausen in Thuringia (former East Germany), the story of Absurd is one of the most emblematic in a period marked by excesses, subversion and "total war", which shaped the DNA of early black metal before it was scaled down and properly channeled into a complacent logic of marketing.

The history of what is considered yet another cursed band has been extensively probed in the book *Lords of Chaos*, in particular the tragic escalation of events that led to the murder of young Sandro Beyer, which occurred on April 29, 1993. For the purpose of this book, those events are indeed entirely circumstantial factors, but it is necessary to briefly retrace them to contextualize an occurrence that will forever remain indelibly linked to the history of the band: a tragic shame according to civilized society, but a possible declaration of integrity from the perspective of the staunchest supporters of black metal.

Absurd were formed in 1992 by Hendrik Möbus and Sebastian Schauseil and soon after, Andreas Kirchner would join their ranks. As Möbus admitted, their influences were very diverse and ranged from classic old black and white horror movies to Dario Argento's thrillers. Musically speaking, the boys came from a punk and Oi! background, which was later integrated with extreme metal that they retrieved in an indirect manner during the years they spent behind the Iron Curtain - the release of *A Blaze in the Northern Sky* by Norway's Darkthrone would clearly show them the path to follow. Although their obvious intent was to play black metal, it is a known fact that the band's



The very rough cover of the demo  
Death from the Forest (1993)

technical skills were rather modest at the time of their first demo, resulting in songs roughly balanced between RAC, black metal and a bit of a punk heritage that did not leave room for particularly compelling artistic perspectives. *God's Death*, the first tape dated 1992, is an indistinct cacophony of sounds, but it still succeeded in creating a small circle of followers around the seventeen year old threesome who, in a fully rebellious



The cover of the second edition of the book *Satanskinder* (2001)

stage, drew from that cauldron of do-it-yourself Satanism, following the footsteps of their fellow Scandinavians without hesitation. *Death from the Forest*, released in early 1993, does not go much further than its predecessor but as we shall see, it will prove eerily prophetic in regard to the title.

According to what is written in the book *Satanskinder* (1994) by Liane von Billerbeck and Frank Nordhausen, the young Sandro Beyer, fascinated by the behavior of the members of the band, tried in every way to get into their restricted congregation of friends, despite being repeatedly rejected and kept at a distance. In a sort of growing obsession, Beyer went from trying to gain acceptance to boycotting Absurd's activities, spreading rumors about them and threatening to reveal the affair that Schauseil had with a woman named Heidegrit Goldhardt, a married woman, 8 years his senior. Years later, in a long interview with Moynihan and Söderlind for *Lords of Chaos*, Hendrik Möbus has rectified some of the facts written in *Satanskinder* - which he called a "junk

book" and for which no member of Absurd had ever issued any statements - claiming that there were several other factors at play. One of these would be Beyer's alleged bisexuality, and his infatuation with Schauseil, which led him to leverage the potential public scandal due to his affair with a married woman (who also got pregnant) to convince him to leave her. Therefore, according to Möbus, the nature of the conflict was strictly private at first. It then took on the implications of an unsustainable problem, to be solved once and for all, only in the context of disputes and tensions that were already underway within Absurd and their group friends.

Whatever the forces at play, the situation worsened on April 29, 1993 when Beyer was deceptively lured into a suburban area of the city where the guys in the band were waiting for him. He was persuaded to follow them into a shed that was located in the nearby woods, where Absurd would usually meet up for rehearsal, and there he was killed, strangled with an electrical wire. In the end, "death came from the forest," as suggested by the prophetic 1993 demo.

The body was first abandoned in the woods and later moved to a quarry, where it was hastily buried. But the attempt to hide the evidence did not last long: Schauseil confessed the incident to a trusted friend, but such a great burden can hardly remain a secret, so an unavoidable word of mouth alerted the victim's parents who found out some disturbing details and called the police. Once the body was recovered, the investigation inevitably led to the members of Absurd, and they were all arrested.

The trial, which took place in early 1994, became a media event in Germany: the peculiar circumstances behind the crime pushed various tabloids to feed the nightmares of the community and to raise an alert about the alleged satanic nature of the incident. In truth, within today's perspective, the murder of Sandro Beyer is clearly the tragic culmination of a series of trivial matters that escaped the control of the protagonists. The crime itself is described as a rambling series of unplanned actions, and in this context the phrase that Andreas Kirchner, the third member of the band and an accomplice, might have pronounced is emblematic: *«Oh shit – now I've completely ruined my life»*<sup>5</sup>. It is hard to imagine that in the chaos of a crime perpetrated by seventeen year old kids, with all its implications, there was some kind of esoteric ritual. We must also consider Absurd's young age at that time and the type of loose Satanism that was carried out in certain black metal circles. Möbus himself, retracing what happened, categorically excludes the satanic track:

*«At the time of the deed we had not consciously celebrated any ritual. To do so under these circumstances would not have even occurred to us. Instead of imaginary religious or ideological aspects it would be better if more attention were paid to the psychological situation at the time of the deed»*<sup>6</sup>.

Either way, the three of them were sentenced: eight years for Schauseil and Möbus, six years for Kirchner. The band's activities, however, were not interrupted, as initially all the members were confined in the same prison in Erfurt. This gave Absurd the opportunity to continue an albeit small musical activity under the name In Ketten ("In Chains"), a sort of pseudonym under which the band actually carried on its actions, taking advantage of a program managed by public institutions that supported the creative activities of young prisoners. It was during this period that they recorded *Out of the Dungeon* and the very well known *Thuringian Pagan Madness*<sup>7</sup>, a tape released in 1995 that goes beyond common sense and bad taste, but completely fulfills the mad race to excess that is typical of true black metal. The tape uses the tombstone of the late Sandro Beyer as cover artwork, complete with a claim contained in the booklet in no uncertain terms: *«The cover shows the grave of Sandro B. murdered by horde ABSURD on 29.04.93 AB»*.

Considered by many as the band's first step into the realm of NSBM, the songs of *Thuringian Pagan Madness* do not actually include overt ideological references and are just a taste of what would soon establish itself as one of the seminal works for the genre, as well as a manifesto of black metal in general: *Facta Loquuntur*. This fierce assault that



Thor's battle against the giants  
by Mårten Eskil Winge

is a mixture of RAC, Oi! and black metal, resulted in songs whose sound is rather distant from the bleak and snowy atmospheres of their North European comrades (if not for calculated exceptions, such as *Eternal Winter*). The album contains lights and shadows, but where the sullen elements of Absurd's sound manage to blend effectively, such as in songs like *Werewolf*, *Pesttanz* or *Mourning Soul*, the songs come to life, and were destined to become the band's longlasting strong suits. Despite the poor conditions in which the album was conceived and the overall bad production, the feeling that comes from those grooves is undeniably black metal, and deeply barbaric.

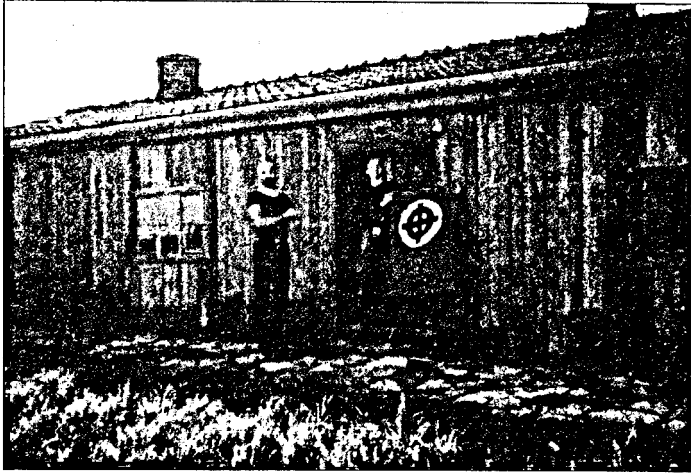
The stylistic discrepancies compared to the Nordic trademark, and the various technical inaccuracies do not seem to have dented the aura of worship that has materialized around the record, which has become

one of the most covered albums by the upcoming NSBM scene: almost every song off *Facta Loquuntur* has in fact been reprised and reinterpreted by a mass of indistinct bands coming from the four corners of the world, making it a milestone of the genre, which can also stand as a point of convergence for all the philosophies inherent to black metal (Norse mythology and militant anti-Christianity in particular).

This union is evident right from the cover, entrusted to the painting *Tors strid med jättarna* ("Thor's battle against the giants") by Swedish artist Mårten Eskil Winge (1825-1896), an image that will become iconic for the kind of Luciferian paganism supported by Absurd, which together with pompous proclamations like «Remember your pagan origins and always follow the honorable way of your pagan ancestors» certifies not only the approach of other issues besides the primordial Satanism of the early days, but also a mutation of the band's line of thought, further evident with the change of logo: instead of the pentacle there is now a Celtic cross, and instead of the now-obsolete inverted cross there is a Thor's Hammer. The print on the disc shows images of the Frogn church in Norway, completely destroyed by fire and reduced to a pile of rubble. A direct link to the Norwegian pioneers and Vikernes' exploits (who in those years was clearly the leading character of the most extreme fringe of black metal and widely revered even by Absurd), representing the primitive anti-Christian essence of the genre.

Released in 1996 by No Colours Records, one of the most important labels at the time, *Facta Loquuntur* inevitably became a testimony of the most feral black metal, also because of the band's deeds, which - as it was standard practice in those years - were reinterpreted and loaded with disproportionate philosophical meanings that went far beyond the mere tabloid news. Therefore we find legions of devoted fans, as happened in Norway, ready to identify Absurd as a creature capable of actually giving form to what black metal stands for.

Soon after their release from prison on probation, in 1998, the band immediately came to terms with Andreas Kirchner's defection, but Schauseil and Möbus had other plans and the whole



*Hendrik and Ronald Möbus at Auschwitz concentration camp*

machine started spinning again, taking the same inexorable direction forcibly abandoned a few years earlier. The coordinates of a thought that has now taken full-blown National Socialist connotations are revealed in the 1999 demo *Sonnenritter*, which has on its cover



*The cover of Asgardsrei, first press (1999)*

a picture of Adolf Eichmann (1906 - 1962)<sup>8</sup>. The decision to use such a well-known and unambiguous icon, does nothing but anticipate the band's most political album: the final blow is given by the mini CD *Asgardsrei* which, in just thirty minutes, manages to rearrange the cards on the table, highlighting a blatant ideological affiliation and, at the same time, unequivocally marking the band's career and offering a particular way of understanding black metal.

Just like *Facta Loquuntur* before it, *Asgardsrei* also suffered from a troubled gestation period from a technical standpoint: originally recorded in a



Flyer advertising the reissue of *Asgardsrei* by *Satanic Skinhead Propaganda* (2012)

hurry and without the help of a sound engineer, the end result left the musicians less than satisfied. Despite the imperfections, however, the hieratic and symphonic intro *Leben Ist Krieg, Krieg Ist Leben* (by Rob Darken of the Polish combo Graveland), and songs like the title track, the rough and square black metal of *Crux Gammata* or the ultra long *Germanien Über Alles* mark the culmination of a subversive journey that started seven years earlier. *Asgardsrei* inevitably became a milestone of Teutonic black metal, hated or loved unconditionally, and at an important pillar of NSBM<sup>9</sup>.

At the same time, Möbus put his label, Darker Than Black, back on track and once again became actively present on the scene (he also created a joint venture with the RAC label Hate Records, in order to offer black metal records to a skinhead audience); moreover, he also got involved in the organization of some live events. Particularly well-known, especially

for the associations it would bring, was the festival renamed Germanic Black Metal Storm, which saw the participation of Nagelfar, Riger, Dunkelgrafen, Barad Dur, Vilkates, Lugburz and a special appearance by Absurd themselves. Held on September 26, 1998, the concert went down in history not only for the performance of the bands but also for the choice of using members of the Hammerskins as security crew for the



*Asgardsrei* (2012) a detail of the booklet graphics



evening. As recalled by Möbus, it was because of some accidents that took place at the end of the show that the authorities once again took an interest in the black metal movement, which culminated in a police raid at the headquarters of Darker Than Black and No Colours Records:

*«At the "Germanic Black Metal Storm" event, we have had Hammerskins doing the security. Alas, there was a state sponsored agent provocateur among their ranks and he started to cause trouble at the end of the concert [...] police came and started to question those left behind (we were on our way already). Some people, mindless as they are, spilled the beans by saying "There was a Nazi event taking place here!", and one thing led to another... One week later, we were raided for the first time because state security suspected me of having "displayed the Hitler salute publicly", among others. When they searched our apartments, they learned of our label and of our distribution too. So, they started to monitor our activities and one year later, they came again – with the intent of shutting D.T.B. Records down for good. They simultaneously raided other labels like No Colours too»<sup>10</sup>.*

Following the closure of the mailorder, in order to avoid the label's name falling into oblivion, Darker Than Black ended up under Shane Rout's control. Rout was the owner of the renowned suicidal black metal project Abyssic Hate and no stranger to certain radical ideas<sup>11</sup>. The "transfer of ownership" of the brand is a rather common practice in the subversive black metal scene, which in those years was constantly monitored by the authorities.

The thorough searches were only a foretaste of what was to come. Möbus' alleged political crimes prompted the prosecutor to ask for an annulment of parole, and the request was granted by the court in September 1999. The less than attractive prospect of going back to jail pushed Möbus to flee to the United States, which, given his legal status, made him a full-fledged fugitive. This exile in the New World turned out to include some unpleasant surprises and encounters with questionable characters.

UNTERZEX

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Attention !!!!!!!

## ATTENTION

After the recent attacks launched by German Z.O.G. against our business, we have decided to close our headquarter in Germany. We will hand our business over to North America at next. All our upcoming releases will be released from there; their realization will get delayed though. Expect HOLOCAUST "The Call of the Thuringian Woods" (Single), ARYAN BLIXX/CAPRICORNUS "Brennendes Jerusalem" (ALB) and PANTHEON "Geldur Vikodlakr" (MCD) at next.

You can work with our new mail: web@hell.de

It will

*Message announcing Darker Than Black's closure by the authorities,  
and the relocation of the activities in North America*

### White Order of Thule members work at pair of tattoo parlors

A racist pagan organization that identifies terrorist members of The Order and its slain leader has moved its headquarters to the Spokane area.

The White Order of Thule, headed by Nathan Pelt, operates two Web sites and publishes a newsletter and journal — all showcasing white superiority.

One of the newsletter's contributors is a convicted cocaine dealer from Maine who is a racist in the belief of a "race traitor"

in a federal prison in Pennsylvania, authorities say.

"The White Order of Thrift is a brotherhood — a loose alignment of Aryan minds, hearts and souls," the organization's literature says.

"We're concerned about this new group because it appears to be reconstituting the racist views of Bob Matthews and The Order," said Brian Goldberg, regional director of the Anti-Defamation League.

The Ovies, founded by Matthews in Alenahne Falls, Wash., carried out racist murders, robberies, bombings and counterfeiting to fund its race war in 1983 and 1984.

Fox is frequently seen at the new Bullet Pool Table at 14401 E. Sprague in the Spokane Valley.

James E. "Swamy" Swanson, who has ties with the Arvan Nations, works as a tattoo artist at another Bullet Proof shop at 7800 N. Division.

Law enforcement officials who track

racist groups confirm that Swanson and Pett, both 26, and other skinheads work at or frequently visit the two tattoo stores.

A Spokane radio station held a live broadcast at the North Division show Friday, promoting the Gonzaga University basketball team. Several fans got tattoos and at least one GU player was on hand.

Some of the proceeds were donated to the Food Bank, KDRK-FM told listeners. Gonzaga President Robert Spitzer later said the university didn't authorize use of its name in the tattoo promotion and had no idea that racists worked at the shop.

**Customer Testimonial**

**VOLUNTARY STATEMENT**

DATE APRIL 3 1968 TIME 8:00 PM PLACE MIAMI, FLA DEPT. INVEST  
BY WILLIAM A. TAYLOR ON 4-3-68 PAGE ONE OF ONE BY MISS AIRLINE  
FILE # 15-10871 (a)

I am giving this statement to T. G. WOODBRIDGE 10 322 who has identified himself as a "Phone Teller" of the City of Miami, Florida, and who states that I have the right to remain silent and not make any statement at all, that any statement I make may be used against me at any time, that any statement I make may be used as evidence against me in court, that I have the right to have a lawyer present to advise me prior to and during any questioning, that I am entitled to have a lawyer to have the right to stop me at any time.

Prior to and during the making of this statement, I have read and do hereby know, understand, and voluntarily make the above voluntary rights and I make this following voluntary statement to the above-named person or of my own free will and without promises or threats of immunity or threat and without promises or promises of any person in present or future.

ON Tuesday, May the 30th, I got here from my job at Ten Thaw grocery on Frost W., (Dadeland, FL) I moved into the apt (#553), I was rooming with Mike Boyd (aka Apt. - 10170). I moved into the apt. (which was) all of work clothes, and read some of my mail and ~~and~~ and the first I did was my groceries for the living room and began making a tape (recording) for a friend. Mike saw it and started saying "C'mon! C'mon!" saying that I was a black guy who was really white. Then he said to me, "I was going for me to follow him and to follow him to his apartment. Outside the black guys were just around, and all of Mike's co-workers, whom I never saw before, was standing there and Mike's girlfriend, Heather, whom Mike told to go with me. Apparently Mike said his co-worker

I have read this statement consisting of \_\_\_\_\_ pages, each page of which bears my signature, and I declare that all facts and statements contained herein are true and correct.

A. Nathan, FBI  
Signature of person making voluntary statement

This statement was given by me and the statement was made by me

[Signature] 10 322

This must be read and the same person in present above

<p>Signature of person making voluntary statement</p>	<p>DEPARTMENT CHIEF [Signature]</p>
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10 322

murder, following a statement given by Pett himself<sup>22</sup>.

In the meantime, the latter had decided that a change of scenery was necessary and moved to Spokane, Washington. At that time, his interests had already brought him into

the orbit of many groups that combined pagan/esoteric beliefs with the precepts of racial purity and the search for an Aryan spirituality. Delving more and more into these topics, in 1996 he published *The Fenris Wolf*, a magazine with a neo-pagan racialist mark, and his contributions also appeared in some issues of *Crossing the Abyss*, the official media of the White Order of Thule. In the meantime, he had become a pivotal member of the latter organization, which seamlessly converged paganism and greek mythology, Hitler and Nietzsche, Evola and Ragnar Redbeard, along with James Mason's bold formulations. All of these activities were in pursuit of a hazy theoretical plan that glorified the martyrs of the American extreme Right as well as Mao, Stalin and Bin Laden<sup>13</sup>.

Möbus, who already knew some members of the White Order of Thule in Germany, started looking for help to leave his homeland and flee to the United States. Pett, who had already shown interest in the new extreme fringes of black metal, writing about them on several occasions in *The Fenris Wolf*, gave him a one-way ticket to Seattle, believing that the two of them could start a fruitful collaboration. At the time, he was trying to launch a label dedicated to black metal called Fenris Wolf Records, and he thought that a partnership with a prominent figure in the European underground could be a good thing, as well as provide him with the distribution of some of the most important releases of the Scandinavian scene.

Hendrik reached Seattle in 1999, and then headed to Pett's headquarters in Spokane, but Pett turned out not to be the best person to do business with. Although Möbus tried to kickstart a mailorder, supplying the fledgling record label with albums and promotional material, things were bound to fail: the American did not have the funds to operate the business properly and he vented his frustrations on Möbus, even suspecting to be under FBI surveillance because of him.

In June 2000, considering the troubled relationship and increasing state of anxiety caused by having to accommodate a wanted man, Pett pushed the leader of Absurd to move to Richmond, Virginia, with another member of the WOT, Michael Lujan. According to Möbus' accounts, Lujan turned out to be an even more unreliable and maladjusted person: full of debts, a manic depressive, and totally unable to manage any long-term assignment, including his commitment to the WOT. Needless to say, the relationship between the two was anything but idyllic, but Möbus was in no position to criticize, and making the best out of a bad situation, he tried to find a new partner for his activities in the music business. He then contacted Resistance Records, controlled by William Luther Pierce's National Alliance.



*Symbol of the White Order of Thule*



Back cover of Galdur Vikodlaks (2000)  
by Pantheon released on Fenris Wolf Records.  
On the left there is the logo of the defunct label

Meanwhile, the Fenris Wolf record label proved to be a total failure. It would release just one album in 2000 by U.S. combo Pantheon, followed by a polemic with the leader of the group Rubeus XIII. Pett blamed his financial difficulties on Möbus, accusing him on several occasions of having caused him to lose money. Together with Lujan (who was indebted to him), Pett decided to orchestrate a retaliation for the alleged loss of money he incurred, and boarded a flight to Richmond with a clear plan in mind. As Möbus remembers:

*«Then they both assailed me while I was sleeping. They bound me with duct tape and handcuffs and took me to the shower. There, Pett beat me with a carpenter's hammer, while Lujan pointed a gun at me. Lujan was supposed to shoot me in the neck. However, he didn't do this. He was not half as raving mad as Pett himself»<sup>14</sup>.*

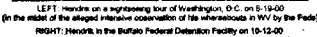
Hendrik was then thrown into a car and abandoned on some suburban street, while Lujan headed to work as if nothing happened and Pett hopped on a plane to Washington. Sore and bruised, Möbus managed to contact Erich Gliebe of Resistance Records, who took him to Hillsboro, West Virginia, to the National Alliance's headquarters. He was taken into the offices of the organization under the fake name of Hans, a German tourist visiting the U.S., and his physical condition was attributed to a motorcycle accident. He received initial medical treatment by Gliebe and Pierce, and then decided to stay in Hillsboro to recover. At the same time, he offered his cooperation and a new partnership was created under the name Ancestral Research Records, yet another subsidiary of Resistance. The intention of this label was to take over the release schedule interrupted by Darker Than Black, leaving aside the now abused satanic imagery of many black metal bands, in order to focus on the new ideological paganism front<sup>15</sup>.

The situation seemed to be changing for the better for Absurd's leader: Pierce was a sharp interlocutor and he had been considering the possibility of opening up to black metal for quite a while (having already acquired the Swedish label Nordland, which, as we shall see later, was the incubator for some of the first connections between black metal and identitarian music). The idea was to enlarge the business and look for new disciples in what appeared to be a rapidly expanding scene that was permeable by the white power cause.

Möbus then offered to help Pierce, but his exodus in a foreign land was coming to an end. The police, under pressure from the German government which had issued an international arrest warrant, intensified the search and traced the address of the mailbox in Washington that Möbus and Pett had jointly used. It was probably Pett himself who

## A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a dense, textured surface, possibly a wall or a large piece of fabric. The image is characterized by a strong vertical line running down the center, which divides the frame into two halves. The texture is highly irregular and grainy, with many small, dark, and light patches. The lighting is very harsh, creating deep shadows and bright highlights that emphasize the roughness of the surface. The overall effect is one of intense, almost abstract, detail.

political Prisoner, Nennis Möbus, has been in solitary confinement (with no reading material other than diversion) in the United States for over 100 days for "crimes" that are not crimes. The "crimes" that supposedly violated his probation are political and non-violent in nature. In the they are acts of free speech specifically protected by the First Amendment. Mike Glendon, of Marshalls said, "We had no information this person was perpetrating or planning any crimes." he was here. Why is the American government so eagerly helping the German government oppress its citizens? How long will it be before Americans also cannot engage in free speech



*Home page of the website Free Hendrik Möbus created after Möbus' arrest in the United States*

In this context, it is possible to draw a parallel between Möbus and Varg Vikernes: although they had different aims, they both became “relevant figures” during their stay in prison, addressing various issues in their writings, ranging from religion to politics, to the law and the problems of today’s society. If Vikernes took refuge in the analysis of pagan tradition and the roots of our race, keeping his distance from practical matters, Möbus remained decidedly closer to concrete issues and the white resistance movement, finding interlocutors among members of the extreme Right both in Europe and in America.

In the months that followed, the leader of the National Alliance tried to obtain political asylum for Möbus, or at least to delay his extradition as much as possible, and launched a campaign to raise awareness about his fate. In addition to talking about it in white nationalist circles and his radio

*Article by Der Spiegel (September 18, 2000)  
about the Möbus affair*

While Möbus was in prison awaiting a verdict that would have granted him political asylum, and devoting himself to writing, the National Alliance raised money to pay lawyers and provide him with legal assistance<sup>17</sup>. They even wrote a letter to then President Bill Clinton to try and get Hendrik the status of a political refugee, arguing that he would be persecuted due to his ideas if he returned to his homeland. This request was rejected on both first and second appeal. On July 29, 2001, at the end of the procedure, Möbus was extradited and, once he returned to Germany, placed under arrest and sentenced to serve his remaining sentence. This sentence was later increased due other crimes attributed to him, keeping him in prison until his final release in 2007.

With Hendrik's extradition, the idea of launching a U.S. branch of Cymophane Records (Burzum's label) finally fell through, because Vikernes - who had granted Möbus the use of the trademark - was reluctant to leave the management in the hands of Dr. Pierce alone, a character he only knew by reputation. Shortly after, Unholy Records was born, a subsidiary of Resistance dedicated to black metal which released several albums by bands such as Nokturnal Mortum, The Shadow Order and Fanisk, alongside groups above any political suspicion, like Nachtmystium. The label also released the double compilation *Visions - A Tribute to Burzum* originally designed to christen the activities of Cymophane's American division.



Meanwhile, across the ocean, other things were happening in the Absurd lair. *Asgardsrei* turned out to be the tombstone for the first incarnation of the band: with Kirchner abandoning the music scene and Möbus a fugitive in the U.S., Schauseil was left holding the reins of the project. However, Sebastian decided to leave everything behind and engage in new musical experiences<sup>18</sup>, partly due to a growing disagreement between him and Möbus that had been intensifying in the late Nineties and culminated with the recording of the infamous EP:

*«At the end of the 1990s, the differences between Hendrik (JF Nidhoegg) and me grew stronger. Thinking of the Asgardsrei album I feel much anger; it was the worst piece of music I ever made, much worse than our demos. [...] When Hendrik had left Europe I felt no necessity to go on with a band which still consisted of myself and with which I could no longer identify. Absurd had become something I didn't want to be part of»<sup>19</sup>.*

The band seemed to have officially split up, but in truth it only took two years before the dreaded name of the tyrants of Teutonic black metal was heard again. When they reappeared on the scene in 2001, many things had changed, starting with the line-up, which was rebuilt from scratch with Ronald Möbus (Hendrik's brother) calling the shots for a group of musicians who would rotate over the years. This new course was partially detached from the peak of musical and ideological intransigence represented

by *Asgardsrei*: the album *Werwolfthron* (2002) marked the return of the new incarnation, and was a defining record, still heavily influenced by the sounds of the previous period; it is a coarse work which, while loosening the grip on the rough RAC component, failed to fully embrace a new musical dimension. The first signs of change are perceived while trying to identify the themes that the album approaches. Themes that distance themselves from the previous course taken by the band. Then there is the cover, which is almost mournful, with just the band's logo and the album title on a black background; it seems to aim for a clean sweep of the past, in order to start from scratch, using those traits of black metal that can be found in songs like *Heaven in Blood* or *We Do not Believe in God* (YHVH).

The real turning point came with the following album, *Totenlieder*, which introduced several innovations in the songwriting, opening a new phase in the band's career. From this moment onwards, they managed to shake off (at least from a musical point of view) the uncomfortable reputation of a being a mere phenomenon that rose to fame only because of the murder and for dealing with forbidden topics. The record is a harbinger of solid black metal that still betrays a particular punk vehemence in certain passages, but it easily falls in the extreme metal category. It is a release that takes advantage of a Teutonic feeling in certain folk-oriented passages, thanks to choruses and simple but effective melodies, managing to act as a bridge between the black metal sound and a more traditional one that is closer to an Eastern European heritage. *In die Schlacht*, *Nordmännerlied*, *Wenn Walküren reiten* convey significantly different atmospheres from the dark, chaotic and restless anthems of destruction on *Facta Loquuntur*.

The following album, *Blutgericht* (2005), ventured into the same soundscapes with additional space given to melodies and epic contaminations, with more refined songs both lyrically and musically. Overall this record proves to be decidedly different from its meagre predecessors, whose echoes are discernible only in some hints of RAC contamination that are still present, especially in the awkward vocal lines that remain a mixed blessing of the band's style. In 2008, to celebrate the band's 15 years of activity, they released *Der Fünfzehnjährige Krieg* a compilation of songs salvaged from early



works and re-recorded by the current line-up. What may look like an ordinary marketing move proves instead to be a work of fine craftsmanship, allowing some historical hymns of barbaric black metal to enjoy a clean and powerful production, giving them a new spirit and making this anthology a particularly successful revisitation of the band's repertoire between past and future.



With the exception of the split album with the U.S. combo Pantheon, a clear example of uncompromising NSBM, Absurd's new course tries to steer clear of dangerous steps into previously treaded territories, although it would be foolish to think that the band has effectively abandoned a certain philosophy<sup>20</sup>. The name is still linked to the National Socialist black metal scene, and it is particularly obvious during their live performances, where there are a sizeable number of skinheads alongside a large group of passionate blacksters and this has remained constant over the years. In this case we can say that the band's affinity with the NSBM scene (if we only consider their career post-*Asgardsrei*) is decreed more by its audience than by the actual proclamations or behavior of the individual members of the band, although they do not seem surprised by the type of audience that attends their shows.

Absurd's very few performances also act as a test to evaluate the wavering interest around the National Socialist black metal phenomenon. Such an underground

ENEMIES  
OF THE  
WORLD

ABSURD

The German Black Metal Legends are back for an exclusive show!

FRANGAR

Black'n'Roll Futurist Warmachine

+ MANY MORE TO COME!

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CARLITO'S WAY CLUB  
strada Bressana/Salice Terme n.22  
RETORBIDO (PV) - ITALY

reality, and with such a controversial history behind it, is constantly monitored, at home and abroad, and it collides with the problems caused by a certain international notoriety. On several occasions they were prevented from playing in Germany (for example in September 2003, along with Kristallnacht and Totenburg, the show was interrupted just before Absurd went on stage), and their relationship with Italy is also pretty unstable: in 2005 and 2010 the band performed without problems in Milan and Lonato del Garda (in the province of Brescia) respectively, while on their last passage the German combo was followed by a trail of controversy started on the Internet which caused a few organizational problems.



Originally planned in Retorbido (Pavia), the concert seemed to go awry when various online channels of militant antagonism released a statement titled *Absurd: Nazi-metal in Pavia. The Fascist German band at the Enemies of the World festival*, which called for a mobilization against the show, pressuring the local authorities to cancel it. After two more sudden changes of location, one of which was really last minute, everything went down smoothly in front of a diverse audience made of old and new metalheads and skinheads - including a large Austrian and German representation, as it is almost impossible to attend this kind of shows in their home countries - plus some curious onlookers. As on other occasions, there was no lack of the inevitable corollary of politically incorrect symbols and Nazi-Fascist flags, typical of an NSBM show (including a controversial banner that read *Black Metal Against Antifa* addressed to those who tried to boycott the evening), but it must be said that the band - whether by choice or legal needs, we do not know - has never incited or responded to the mass of outstretched arms that cyclically rose towards the stage.

Absurd seem to live between the present and the past. Today they are less extreme than they used to be, but they always exist in the shadow of that season of blood which has determined their cult status. It is almost impossible not to draw parallels with what happened to Burzum: both bands have become the leading exponents of a national underground radicalism, both have faced the terrible consequences of criminal acts that have undermined their career, but also fueled an almost legendary status. Both of them have never aligned with the criteria of political correctness, bringing their ideological excesses to the extreme, thus earning the title of forerunners of what would later become NSBM. To sum it up, we can say that if Burzum has started the phenomenon, Absurd have institutionalized it, finding their way into the ranks of the skinhead scene and completing a process of creating union and loyalty out of an audience that comes from two different subcultures but is united by the same, brutal ideological inclination.



While it is beyond doubt that Absurd has played a key role in laying the foundations of NSBM, globally as well as in Germany, other bands have contributed to stirring up the German underground, taking the first steps in the name of NS-oriented black metal.

The first band to exaggerate with a certain aesthetic and to shamelessly place themselves under the banner of National Socialist metal were Morke, a Bavarian combo that remained on the scene for only about five years, but made their ideas very clear right from the first demo. *Finsternis* is a primordial tape, almost unlistenable because of a recording that is beyond cacophonous, almost punk, but from the chaos emerges a furious black metal, basic and without frills, with a shrill and hysterical voice raging in it. From a musical point of view the result can hardly aspire to join the élite of the metal scene, but their short career in the name of a virulent sound gave us three other tapes on the same level,



Cover of Morke's first demo

before achieving the only result of some relevance, that is, the split CD with the French combo Kristallnacht, released in 1997, which marks both the beginning of the fledgling French NSBM band's career and the definitive end of the German one's.

The name Morke remains linked to another typical underground phenomenon which in those years was pretty popular, that is, the creation of circles of followers whose aims ranged from planning attacks on the institutions of the Church to keeping intact the spirit of the purest black metal. So, just like Norway had the Inner Circle and Poland had The Temple of Fullmoon, in Germany there was the Teutonic Brotherhood, a

self-appointed supervisory

board on the events within the local black metal scene.

This congregation, that Absurd were also a part of, was joined by another obscure project called Coven of the Worm, devoted to crossing musical and aesthetical extremes of rare brutality for the times, with very diverse stylistic directions and even some hints at death metal. They only released three demos (later collected in a CD anthology titled 1992-1996), all marred by extremely poor production that transforms the tracks into a maelstrom of broken and barely distinguishable sounds. The result retains the feeling of the darkest years of black metal, but it is attractive only for those who are already accustomed to dealing with releases that are more challenging



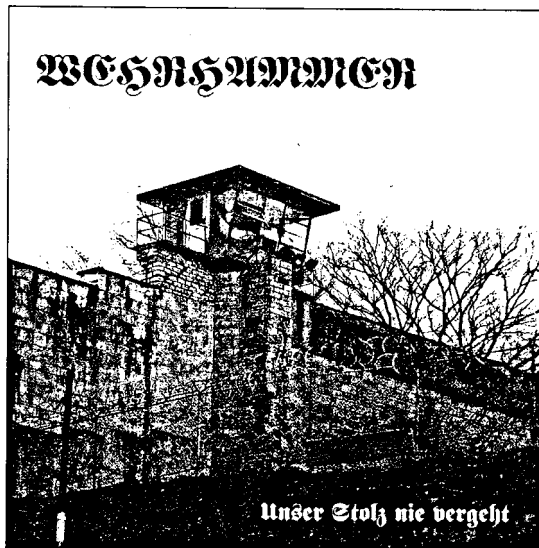
Morke

than entertaining.



From the ashes of this primordial avantgarde some very radical bands took their first steps, like Atra Mors and especially Wehrhammer, founded in 1993 by a former member of Coven of the Worm, who became a sort of mysterious cult act in the German NSBM circuit. The twenty-year long career of this one-man band is marked by an impressive recording hyperactivity: more than twenty releases between demos, split albums,

and EPs, all very limited and difficult to find, resulting in a strong appeal to collectors and a considerable increase of the prices in the various online auctions. Worship aside, Wehrhammer are actually the creators of a linear and monothematic NSBM assault, with a repertoire of short, direct, and all quite similar songs, based on a repetitive structure and distorted guitars. Some of the older songs show the desire to recreate more claustrophobic atmospheres, slowing down the speed, but overall their musical formula is dangerously repetitive, also due to their limited technical skills. Slightly more dynamic structures and impromptu hints at RAC are the ingredients of some of the more recent productions, such as the explicit 7" *Unser Stolz Nie vergeht* (2010) or *Der Befehl* (2012), which demonstrate some changes on a musical level, but certainly none on the ideological front. Although they are not an essential project in the NSBM scene, Wehrhammer remain a historical name and they are still active; they are also a perfect example of the typical modus operandi of the most obscure bands in the German ideologized underground.



Promo picture of Widar of Bilskirnir

Definitely far from excessive tones, provocative Satanism and an over the top attitude, are Widar's Bilskirnir, leading exponents of German pagan black metal. Despite a rather blatant ideological foundation, which is based on the dictates of paganism and nationalism, Widar has always kept away from provocative declarations and uncalled for excess (especially in his records), preferring a more pragmatic approach that aims to stay off the system's radar, without engaging in an endless - and pointless - battle with the authorities:

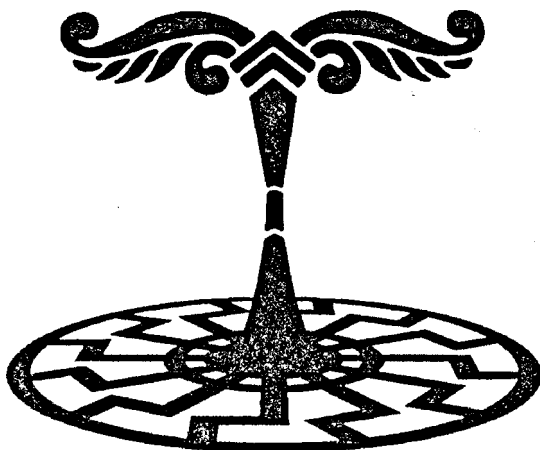
*«Bilskirnir is not based on any kind of provocation nor do I try to have the biggest amount of forbidden or banned symbols on my covers. Nowadays laws concerning*

certain things (guess you know what we're talking about here) are not that pleasant and there's no need to provoke avoidable troubles. If I like to spread a message within my art but use certain symbolism, German authorities might get interested in it, records might be banned and the label and band might get confronted with some more unpleasant things. So in the end, I don't get anything positive from all that and that is hardly my intention. This may be seen as some lame excuse, but we have to face the facts to see what kind of action might make sense and what could be seen as a waste of time»<sup>21</sup>.

Consistent with what was stated, Bilskirnir's graphics have always been oriented towards a warlike aesthetic, clearly inspired by the pre-Christian era. This has been obvious ever since the very first tape, *For Victory We Ride*, whose cover shows a simple Thor's hammer. The influence of the primordial Nordic culture is important both in the graphics department and for the lyrical and conceptual aspect, in which the aversion to Christian worship is joined by a strong identity tenaciously bound to a context of cultural preservation and national history.

From *In Flames of Purification* until *Atavismus des Glaubens*, Bilskirnir's sound has always maintained a balance between black and pagan metal, with more sustained passages that evoke the sound of the German school and epic mid-tempos that constitute the band's main trademark and reveal the influence of bands such as Graveland (see the cover versions of *Barbarism Returns* and *Through the Occult Veil*), though Widar is able to give it all a personal touch thanks to a well-balanced use of melodies that are not blatantly derivative. There are also some split albums, even in Bilskirnir's case a mandatory practice: over the years, there have been splits with Nordreich, Pantheon, Evil, Barad Dûr and other more or less well-known representatives of the extreme metal scene.

The collaboration with the German combo Finsterwald deserves a separate mention, at least because of the cover, which shows a work by the famous symbolist painter Franz Von Stuck that reinterprets the myth of the Wild Hunt, a theme that is not new within the black metal scene<sup>22</sup>, but takes on a rather bizarre meaning in this specific context. In Von Stuck's vision, the Wild Hunt becomes a dark fresco with apocalyptic undertones, where a spirited Odin leads a group of disturbing and evanescent figures; but the peculiarity lies in the fact that Odin has a strong resemblance to Adolf Hitler, although the painting was done in 1889 - as it happens, the year of birth of the future tyrant<sup>23</sup>.





*The wild hunt interpreted by the painter Franz von Stuck (1889)*

Also of some interest, because of the thematic aspects it implies, is the work shared with Hungary's Hunok, *Allied by Heathen Blood*, where Bilskirnir transposes into music a poem by the German writer Friedrich Hielscher (1902 - 1990) titled *Wir Rufen Deine Wölfe*. Hielscher is a complex figure, part of that broad current of traditional and nationalist orientation known as Conservative Revolution, as well as the exponent of a personal form of neo-paganism; and although contiguous to certain aspects of the Nazi way of thinking, he stubbornly declared himself against Hitler, as he did not agree with his principles of selection based on race.

If Bilskirnir's musical guidelines are clear and in a way unwavering, the ideological aspects prove to be more structured, even though they follow some classic elements of paganism in its most radical and nationalist interpretation. In Widar's words, we do not find the anxious exaltation of a pan-Aryanism of European origin, very common among the NSBM bands, but rather a more nationalist vision accompanied by a deep concern for the loss of identity of the populations of Germanic origin, whose traditions were first destroyed by the advent of Christianity and suffer today due to the materialistic and corrupt ways of the modern world. However, not even the big pagan revival of the last few years seems to have Widar's approval, especially if coupled with a New Age spirituality that now seems well established:

*«I should not forget to speak about the most annoying kind of neo-pagans, those hippie minded, peace preaching, political correct, anti-Fascist, wannabe-pagans. [...] How can someone think to live in accordance to its ancestors ideals when he closes his eyes in front of all the actual problems his*

## INTO THE WOLF'S DEN

*people are suffering from? They don't want to talk about politics and they don't want to be mixed up with nationalists and the like but what do they think their paganism will look like in maybe 60 years, where there's no one left to care about the pagan traditions anymore?»<sup>24</sup>.*

Although Bilskirnir cannot be considered the most extreme band around, not for the contents nor for the choice of aesthetics, the founder did have problems due to his philosophical background which, though latent, he has never hidden. Being a big fan of Katatonia, Widar was in fact supposed to participate in a tribute album to the Swedish band titled *December Songs - A Tribute to Katatonia*, sponsored by Northern Silence Records and then released in 2006. Apparently, some other artists who were going to take part in the tribute did not appreciate the presence of the Teutonic project and hustled to exclude it - although, Widar speculates, it may have been an afterthought of the label itself in order to avoid conflicts with various distributors<sup>25</sup>. Whatever the causes, there is no trace of Bilskirnir's participation on that double CD, although it had been announced in the press. Despite this kind of situation, Widar's work has proceeded smoothly so far.

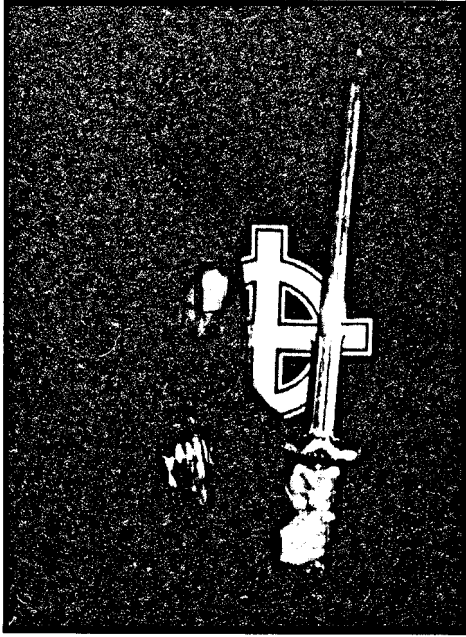
His last work, *Wetansveik*, is even more akin to certain pagan metal sounds that reflect the influence of Graveland, while remaining anchored to a solid black metal matrix and the same direction can also be detected in the lyrics: in perfect accordance with the rejection of modernity and materialism that characterize him, they settle on a fierce critique of contemporary society, which is the basis of both pagan metal and NSBM:

*To reach for the ancient land in the ultimate of north  
Where pride and purity led to nobility  
Lowliness as the highest order  
In accordance to nature's eternal laws of life  
All falsehood unable to conquer our minds  
Omnipresent was the god within ourselves*

*Suddenly... materialism became part of our lives  
So the unity was shattered  
Soon we forgot about our inner voice  
Man's instinct overcome by superstition<sup>26</sup>*



There is no doubt that among the most significant names of the German wave is that of Argus Blood, a one-man band founded by Norgender in 1998 and dedicated to a fierce and one-dimensional Nazi propaganda that does not hide behind covert names or paganism but openly declares itself through a series of works relevant in limited editions. On the website of the label Darker Than Black the band's biography is summed up in a few lines that feed the myth among the most uncompromising followers of Nazi orthodoxy:



*Negrobutter of Aryan Blood*

«Clandestine NSBM echoing from the hollow Earth. All music is being executed by the orphan grandson of a late generalmajor of the Third Reich, who got initiated in the mysteries of the black sun during his expeditions to remote areas in the high mountains of the Far East»<sup>27</sup>.

Right from the first demos the direction could not have been more clear, with songs like *Swastika*, *Triumph of the Will*, and *Eternal Strife* that will be largely reprinted and used on the various split albums that mark the band's career. The first official release is a shared work with Capricorn (a combination suggested by Hendrik Möbus of Darker Than Black), *Brennendes Jerusalem/Ortus Hominis Optimi Maximi* which came out in 1999, the celebration of a German-Polish axis with a very dif-

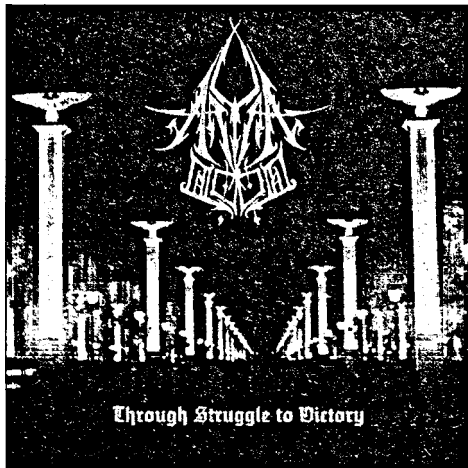
ferent outcome than that of the Second World War. The two tracks, the unmistakable *Aryan Supremacy* and *To Build an Empire of Thousand Years*, are characterized by a basic black metal with unusual but rather simple and square rhythms, albeit functional in their roughness. Initially these songs were supposed to appear on a split album with their compatriots Morke, but the latter's decision to include a cover version of *God of Thunder* by Kiss (which ended up on their split CD with *Kristallnacht*) led the original project to fail.

In the following years they collaborated with some of the most talked about projects within the scene, the first being the Swiss band Eisenwinter. This release finds the German combo contributing six songs, ranging from the symphonic intro *Einklang* (which almost seems taken from Summoning's Tolkien-inspired alchemies) to the brutal *Massenvernichtung* and *Ortus Hominis Optimi Maximi*, in which the characteristic lo-fi guitar sound is so extreme that it verges on noise. On this work there is also a peculiar cover which, after a first distracted listen, does indeed surprise for its completely



different sound: *Unsere Fahne flattert voran uns* ("Our flag waves in front of us") is in fact, a reworked metal version of one of the hymns of the Hitler Jugend with extensive use of distorted guitars and effects. The lyrics were written by Baldur von Schirach (1907 - 1974)<sup>28</sup>, and set to music by German composer Hans-Otto Borgmann (1901 - 1977).

This vast repertoire of split albums sees a turnover of other relevant names of the black metal scene, such as Brazil's Evil and the usual Satanic Warmaster, not to mention the project *Gemeinschaftstonträger*, a joint collaboration with Nordreich, The True Frost and another German band of clear political stance: Flammentod.



In 2010, Totenkopf Propaganda released *Through Struggle to Victory* as a celebration of their long militancy in the underground. This anthology collects virtually everything that has been produced by Aryan Blood, whose career is retraced in the liner notes along with a brief writing-manifesto that outlines their ideology:

*«This modern world preaches interracial sexuality, homosexual relationships, so called emancipation and other ways of "self-expression" which are in no way in accordance with a healthy and natural way of living [...] We seek for a revival of natural values and ethics, thus we stand against the modern world and its masonic ideas of equality and internationalism. [...] We want self-determination, based on racial and cultural awareness»<sup>29</sup>.*

Totenburg are another band that deserves attention (the name comes from Totenburgen, literally "castles of the dead", the buildings that Hitler wanted to erect as a tribute to the fallen of World War II). Although they came to the fore later when compared to the first wave of Teutonic NSBM, they have persevered and earned a significant position within the scene. Their debut, *Weltmacht Oder Niedergang* owes a lot to old school black metal, as proved by the cover versions of Burzum (*Dunkelheit*) and Absurd (*Werwolf*) that appear on the track-list. Musically, they prefer bare, vaguely melodic mid-tempos, a true trademark of the band which also recurs in their following album, *Winterschlacht*, whose peculiarity lies in a curious piece of propaganda titled *Free Grishnackh*. The song opens with a recording in English taken from some newscast in which they report the murder of Euronymous, and then turns into a kind of tribute song to the Count's exploits.

Around the same time, some members of Totenburg helped fill the ranks of Absurd for their live appearances<sup>30</sup>: the band led by Ronald Möbus, which was definitely affected by Hendrik's fugitive status in the United States and the abandonment of the other



founding members, was forced to improvise a line-up starting almost from scratch. Despite the impromptu presence at the court of Absurd, the band did not neglect its activities and showed a constant evolution through the following releases: *Pestpogrom* (2004), *Mit uns das Blut* (2005), *Endzeit* (2009): the new albums progressively put aside the monotonous riffing of the early years - and some black metal clichés, such as the pro-Burzum track mentioned earlier - offering a thicker and more aggressive sound thanks to a growing individual technique. This is effectively underlined by a cleaner production that enhances songs like *Im Chaos Erloschen* or *Blutschwur*. The lyrics dwell - needless to say - on classical themes for this type of proposal, ranging from paganism to war, although from a perspective that is not blatantly shameless but perfectly intelligible.

Even Totenburg go through the classic ritual of the split albums, which are the fastest way to create relevant connections within a fragmented scene that needs people who are seriously dedicated to the cause: no openly NSBM band has ever released a split album with bands who are not at least partially aligned with a certain philosophy. Collaborations with Menneskerhat, Satanic Warmaster and especially Der Stürmer make it clear that the band does not fear the repercussions of an inevitable association with certain ideologies. It is the project with the latter - *Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum* (2007) - that follows the proverbial criteria of thematic/sound intransigence that is relevant to the Greek scene. The record also shows Totenburg under a new guise, especially concerning the musical aspect, with two tracks over 11 minutes long that reveal an attempt at dealing with black metal from a different angle, preferring more complex and martial solutions, alternating them with accelerations that are more in line with the style that the band will undertake with the next full-length. As evidence of a direct and inherent link to the NSBM scene, the split album is dedicated to two key figures of the movement who died within a year from each other: Richard Mills of Grand Belial's Key, who passed in 2006, and Ulv Gegner Irminsson, a key element of the Russian NSBM enclave known as Blazebirth Hall, who was killed in 2005 - but we shall talk more about them both later.



If up to now we have dealt with the exploits of some of the biggest names of the German scene, many of whom are still tirelessly active, we can not refrain from glimpsing into the recesses of the underground, which offers releases balanced between the revolutionary spirit of early black metal and certain ideological elements still in their embryonic form. In this forgotten niche are Mjöltnir, formed back in 1991, whose musical journey unfolds throughout the Nineties: their only full-length, *Hinweg über die Tore der Zeit* (1998), is a concentration of atmospheric black metal in which thrash metal riffing acts as a supporting structure to the work of the keyboards, which are the real trademark of the album. The epic *Bis dass der Tod die Zeit besiegt*, a twenty minute long black suite,



sums up in one symbolic song all the facets of Mjölneur's sound, moving with unusual character within symphonic black metal that never loses intensity, and remains surrounded by dark and high-impact atmospheres. Although pervaded by a tangible ideology, but not too explicit in terms of images and lyrics, the album remains one of the most original and valid examples of black metal produced in Germany. Released back when the term NSBM was far from entering the common jargon, at the time it was identified simply as an extreme, somewhat con-

troversial, metal album, but this did not prevent it from appearing in various magazines, receiving much praise<sup>31</sup>.

In this underground network characterized by bands that form and split-up within a few demos, few are able to maintain a constant stream of releases and a certain presence in the scene, and even fewer actually obtain recognition in the form of a full-length. Among the most "borderline" bands, Xenophobic deserve to be mentioned as an example of aesthetic barbarism. They are the advocates of a self-proclaimed "Holocaust Black'n'RAC Metal" that puts them in the wake of a Nazi exploitation that is far from ambiguous: from the logo to the cover of the debut album *Evangelium der Vergasung*, the band shows a remarkable repertoire of blind brutality made of sinister Nazism and anti-Semitism. Musically, the results are definitely not memorable, but the general perception is that Xenophobic are not quite interested in the artistic aspect: the band seems to be much more at ease abusing images and proclamations that verge on bad taste (the booklet is full of photos ranging from Heinrich Himmler to Julius Streicher, and the Jewish deportations) than with their instruments. *Evangelium der Vergasung* is a completely fringe record that does not even remotely try to fit into a structured political context, as proved by *Stairway to Adolf Hitler* (a completely ridiculous and grotesque song which is nothing if not a cover of Led Zeppelin's masterpiece onto which they inserted excerpts from



Hitler's speeches) and the words placed on the booklet, that say «*Keine Politik! Purer Rassismus*» ("No politics! Pure racism!")

The German scene is still able to offer bands that are less blatantly over the top, such as Nordglanz. They too are tried and tested protagonists of the underground, with five full-length releases. The "Thulean Nationalist Black Metal" offered by the band is well made and, in spite of the many other examples we have seen so far, it does not dwell in disastrous production in search of the classic necro-sound. On the contrary it is clean and well executed, with a distinctly Teutonic feeling, existing constantly in between RAC influences and pagan metal, each time mixed in different percentages. Even the ideological directions are very clear and expressed by songs like *Töten für Wotan*, *Gold gab ich für Eisen* or *Knights of the Sunwheel*, one of the rare tracks that uses English, with the recurring themes of pre-Christian roots and the Aryan myth, that are typical of many ideologized pagan metal bands:

*«Once there was a race full of pride and glory, let me tell you something of their ancient story. Their Symbol was the sun and mighty runes, secret holy signs to honour the gods. Their fatherland was the secret north, mighty Thule from there they came from. To spread culture over the earth, And bring back again the Aryan rebirth»<sup>32</sup>.*

Cast in a very different mold are Holocaustus (who have now split-up) and the already mentioned Flammentod, both active since the late Nineties and suffering from over-productivity: between the two of them they have released something like thirty or more tapes, EPs, split albums and full-lengths - but the paradox is that the same person is behind both projects! The question remains whether such a hypertrophic discography is the result of a real need for expression (or propaganda), or rather a serialized production that, without paying too much attention, relies on tried and tested models and canonized musical styles. Holocaustus' career revolves exclusively around demos and split albums, just like Flammentod's resumé, although with this project he has also released a couple of full-lengths, albeit with a very limited print run. Fishing through the large pool of productions, what we have in our hands leaves no doubts about the direction he has taken (*Against Zionist Order*, *Heil Deutschland*, *Hoch in Ehren*, *Ehre=Treue=Vaterland*) while some palpable differences emerge because of a slight stylistic discrepancy: if Holocaustus' reference is raw black metal without breaks or concessions, one-dimensional in its sound and end result, Flammentod is not ashamed to slow down the pace and enjoy rough keyboard passages in an attempt to build more elaborate atmospheres, while remaining firmly anchored to the NSBM matrix that forms its backbone. Like Wehrhammer before them, these two projects represent the culmination of that self-sufficient and undercover spirit that characterizes several German NSBM projects, which are forced to act with very little room to maneuver and whose scant productions seem reserved to a small circuit of loyal and nostalgic fans.



Despite legislation that does everything possible to contain ideological outbreaks, a scene scattered among old glories, and projects relegated to an inaccessible underground and minor realities whose impact is altogether marginal, Germany remains a key player when defining the geography of National Socialist black metal. Starting with the activities of some important labels like Darker Than Black and No Colours (which, although they do not limit themselves to NSBM, continue to provide support to bands with a controversial background), and the important logistical role played in putting the Western black metal scene in contact with the one that was taking shape beyond the Iron Curtain.

### Notes:

1 - M. Serrano, *C. G. Jung and Hermann Hesse – A Record of Two Friendships*, Routledge, London 1966.

2 - Taken from the introduction to the article *German NSBM Scene Report*, from Wallachian Tyrant n. 4, autumn 2003.

3 - Landser are the most famous German Oi!/RAC band belonging to the neo-Nazi scene, known for being considered an actual criminal organization by the authorities, a measure that had their singer Michael Regener arrested.

4 - It is worth mentioning the dossier titled *Der rechte Rand im Black Metal* (published on RockHard n. 241, June 2007 signed by the well-known journalist Wolf Rüdiger Mühlmann) in which there is an excursus on the international NSBM scene which caused some fiery debates.

5 - As described in *Lords of Chaos* which in this case draws on what is written in the book *Satanskinder* by Liane von Billerbeck and Frank Nordhausen (*Satanskinder – Der Mordfall von Sondershausen und die rechte Szene*, Ch. Links, Berlin 2001).

6 - M. Moynihan and D. Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003.

The fact that the homicide was the degeneration of a feud between young people and not a "satanic sacrifice" or, as certain press wrote - riding on Möbus' connection with the neo-Nazi scene - a racist crime, is reiterated in the article *Seven Years of Stupidity, Lies, and Ignorance* written by Möbus during his fugitive years in the United States.

7 - In truth, as we learn from an interview that appeared in Defiance Magazine ([www.defiancemag.com](http://www.defiancemag.com)) in May 2012, the initial idea was to release this work as a 7" to christen the activities of the newborn Darker Than Black, founded in 1994 and managed by Hendrik Möbus himself, but the lack of funds and the obvious problems with the law saw these plans fall through. The release of the tape was then carried by Capricornus' label, one of the leading exponents of the Polish radical black metal scene.

8 - Considered by Hitler's regime an expert on "Jewish issues", he was one of the main people responsible for the extermination of the Jews, deserving the nickname of Architect of the Holocaust. At the end of the war he disappeared, taking refuge in Argentina, where he was later identified and captured by the Mossad, the Israeli secret service. Once in Israel he was put on trial for crimes against humanity and found guilty, sentenced to death by hanging.

9 - Reissued several times (among other labels by Resistance Records, by Italy's Valknut Records and the com-patriots World Terror Committee and Nebelfee Klangwerke before being banned by the German authorities in 2010), the record will finally find its complete form in 2012, when the fortuitous discovery of the original master opened the door to a process of recovery of the original material, appropriately remixed and remastered. The result will then be released by Satanic Skinhead Propaganda and Totenkopf Propaganda - probably the two most relevant labels in today's NSBM scene - with a graphic section that is excessive to say the least, especially considering the low profile maintained in recent years, at least from the point of view of the releases. Swastikas, black suns, Totenkopf, imperial eagles and everything else that can infuriate the powers that be is explicitly shown inside the booklet which, with its bright yellow, red and black tones serves as a visual compendium to the ideological fury contained in the record.

10 - Darker Than Black, from Defiance Magazine ([www.defiancemag.com](http://www.defiancemag.com)), May 2012.

11 - Abyssic Hate, from Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagonam n.1, 2001.

12 - The fact that Pett had testified against Boyd remained a secret until 1999, when the official documents of his testimony surfaced. The publication of the memos sparked the usual accusations of "betrayal of the race", although Pett tried to refute the veracity of the documents and unsuccessfully tried to put the blame on the fourth member of the group, who was driving the vehicle. Most likely as a result of these facts, Pett suffered a violent beating and ended up in the hospital. With his hospitalization, and considering that he was the only one at the helm of WOT and the magazine Crossing the Abyss, the order lost its importance and dissolved without a trace. Later on there would be rumours about his alleged suicide, while elsewhere there was talk about retaliation by men of the National Alliance. In truth, today Pett has left the scene, denying his past and his involvement in the nationalist movement, as proven by an interview published on the Southern Poverty Law Center website in which he heavily puts into perspective the importance of the WOT in the radical scene: *«Let's face it — the White Order of Thule had such a small amount of people. The chapter in Virginia was just Michael Lujan and a P.O. box. The same with me in Washington state. I was the only guy there»*. From Southern Poverty Law Center ([www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org)), spring 2011.

13 - Besides Pett, in the upper echelons there were founder Peter Georgacarakos, a cocaine dealer who was a convict back then, Joseph Kerrick, an eccentric occultist who spent years in and out of any sect or New Age coven, and Michael Lujan who played a key role in the Möbus affair.

14 - H. Möbus, *Interview by the Committed to Free Hendrik Möbus*, from Free Hendrik Möbus ([www.geocities.ws/evelynnnavan](http://www.geocities.ws/evelynnnavan)), November 2000.

15 - H. Möbus, *Hendrik Möbus Discusses his Role as a Music Producer*, from Free Hendrik Möbus ([www.geocities.ws/evelynnnavan](http://www.geocities.ws/evelynnnavan)), 2001. The label will cease its activities in August 2000 after Möbus' arrest.

16 - As told by Evelyn Hill (curator of the website Free Hendrik Möbus), in an interview for the website Mourning the Ancient ([www.mourningtheancient.com](http://www.mourningtheancient.com)).

17 - Operation that will be partly criticized by some members of the movement, one of whom wrote a letter asking why the National Alliance was doing all this for Möbus. Showing little respect for the latter the author of the letter wondered how many weapons and ammunitions they would have been able to buy with the money used for legal assistance and closing: *«Hendrik Möbus is no "Horst Wessel" nor "Bob Mathews"», A Letter From a Critic*, from Free Hendrik Möbus ([www.geocities.ws/evelynnnavan](http://www.geocities.ws/evelynnnavan)), January 2000.

18 - Halgadam first and Wolfsmond later, were both linked to NSBM by "osmosis" because of Schauseil. Regarding these labels, Sebastian cut short: *«Many people who hear about Wolfsmond guess it must be NSBM because I have been into this some time ago. It seems as if they were not able to use their brains; when you look at our answers given in interviews and when you look at our lyrics you'll find out that there is no relation to any political idea at all [...] Anyway, since I started my studies in Political Science, I recognized that politics are always the same, not depending of what color they are»* from Vampire Magazine ([www.vampire-magazine.com](http://www.vampire-magazine.com)), December 2004.

## INTO THE WOLF'S DEN

19 - Wolfsmond, from Vampire Magazine (www.vampire-magazine.com), December 2004.

20 - It is also proven by the participation in the compilation arranged by the organization Blood & Honour, which sees a considerable adhesion of Teutonic bands (Barad Dür, Eugenik and Totenburg among others) ready to carry the black metal banner in those territories that are relevant to the organized extreme Right.

21 - Bilskirnir, from Laudatio Funebris n.1, spring 2007.

22 - See the long and detailed chapter dedicated to the Wild Hunt in *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003.

23 - A reproduction of the same painting was also used for the reissue of *Asgardsrei* by Absurd released by the little known Italian label Valknut Records; one could say that the painting has become a sort of "classic" of the German NSBM aesthetics.

24 - Bilskirnir, from Laudatio Funebris n.1, spring 2007.

25 - Ibid.

26 - Excerpt from the song by Bilskirnir *Reconquering Atlantean Supremacy*.

27 - From the band's biography published on Darker Than Black's website.

28 - Baldur von Schirach was a leading figure in the organizational chart of the Nazi Party. He joined the movement at an early age, then he became head of the Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Studentenbund ("League of the National Socialist German students") and then, in 1933, he became the leader of the Hitler Jugend. After leaving the leadership of the youth corps he was engaged on the French front, from which he returned decorated with the Iron Cross, before being transferred to Vienna with the rank of Gauleiter (a sort of governor of the region). In 1945 he surrendered to the Allies and was one of 24 defendants at the Nuremberg Trials, where he was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

29 - Excerpt from the manifesto in the booklet of *Through Struggle to Victory*.

30 - Absurd, from Blood & Honour n.30, 2004.

31 - Interesting piece of trivia courtesy of the Italian music press: the record scored a resounding 9/10 on Grind Zone magazine with an emphatic and triumphant review: «We believe in the Aryan/Hyperborean supremacy, and in its dignity. We believe in war and in its selection. We believe in the demons deep in the abyss and their eternal lament... These are the words and the images that come to mind while listening to Mjöltnir, the pure essence of what black metal has been and should have continued to be. Music for the chosen races» (from Grind Zone 4, 1999). This excess of politically incorrect enthusiasm caused the angry response of a reader, which was published in the next issue, where he attacked the journalist for connecting black metal to a political and ideological context that has nothing to do with the real nature of the genre, which should remain a form of art detached from issues affecting the world.

32 - Excerpt from the song by Nordglanz *Knights of the Sunwheel*.

## A glance at the Pagan Front

«THE PAGAN FRONT IS THE FORTRESS OF NSBM – A RECRUITING TOOL OF CULTURAL AND RACIAL AWAKENING...»<sup>1</sup>

[WODULF]

The Pagan Front is the cradle of the most militant paganism, against the monotheistic triad consisting of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. It is an organization that still has a key role in spreading and supporting the NSBM phenomenon and related activities. It is essentially the largest international network of bands, creative people, labels, distributors and publications<sup>2</sup> that have a pan-European sense of identity as a common denominator, mainly promoted through extreme music. An "army of pagan metal", under whose protective wing, all the most relevant names within the racist metal and NSBM scene have found refuge, sooner or later.

*«This white youth's subculture was truly born of the echoes from the suppressed and the depressed Aryan blood, born and forged in the glare of the burning churches and in the blood of the murdered submen. Unlike the never-serious pseudo "originators" of the "black metal" term heavy metallists Venom (and their wannabes like Hellhammer, Bathory or Mayhem) the first real black metal band was the National Socialist Burzum»<sup>3</sup>.*

To understand the importance of the Pagan Front within the National Socialist black metal circle, just consider that among its most relevant members there are Graveland, Absurd and Der Stürmer, unanimously recognized as the leading representatives of the NSBM scene worldwide. Followed, in no particular order, by Stormheit, Kataxu, Pantheon, Dark Fury, Xenophobia, Disiplin, Wodulf, Bilskirnir and many others, thus proving the network's extent and coverage.

*«We intend our music as a means for spreading a message that can go beyond the mere aesthetic pleasure. The listener should be encouraged to think. We would like him to relate to paganism, seen and understood as we do. And that is why we try to motivate our comrades and our supporters to political activism»<sup>4</sup>.*

But this organization is not an isolated case. In the beginning - we are talking about the second half of the Nineties - there have been other somewhat similar experiments

# The Political Program

## Introduction to the ideals of the Allgermanische Heidnische Front

We fight to create a free Grossgermania with a competent defence, and a strong responsible leadership who serves the people, and who be the bounds between the people and the soil of the fatherland, strengthen unity and loyalty, religion and culture.

A competent defence and freedom demands a firm and healthy human stock, red-hot with enthusiasm towards its elevated task, and of its germanic blood and its kin, secure.

The state thus become strong and moral. Its guideline is the welfare of the people. Grossgermania shall be ruled by the Nationalist ideas and get a common rule after the same principles. This way the ungermanic phenomena of different times caused by parliamentarism and bureaucracy disappear. The political rights are proportional with the military performances and for women their efforts as mothers.

—moral import—

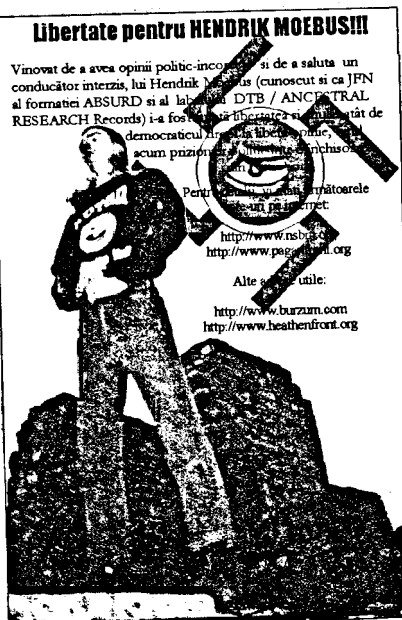
*Excerpt of the political manifesto of the Allgermanische Heidnische Front*

religious aspect in terms of *völkisch* radicalism, although aiming at a music-oriented propaganda which is, not surprisingly, one of the most fruitful and effective means to spread the belligerent doctrine that unites these new heirs of Odin scattered across the globe. A form of paganism, it is necessary to clarify, that has little to do with New Age syncretism and its connection to concepts such as tolerance, equality, freedom, democracy and coexistence. Far from it.

*«This pseudo-“paganism”, that wouldn’t want to offend anyone and would like to get along with everyone, if compared to the real paganism, looks like a neutered dog in the presence of a wild wolf»<sup>5</sup>.*

Towards the end of the past millennium, the Pagan Front started to make a name for itself thanks to a series of anthologies-manifestos titled *The Night and the Fog*, which in three volumes (respectively in 1999, 2003 and 2007) contributed to define the direction of the movement that it represents. The first of these has essentially formalized the term “National Socialist Black Metal”, the second has clarified the origins and intents with an article titled: *The Pagan Front – Return of the Iron Reich of Black Metal*, while the third output was accompanied by a true manifesto of the pan-Aryan organization – a list of twelve pretty explicit “commandments”: *Proud National Socialists, Against any Judeo-Christian influence, Zero tolerance for the enemies of our race, Let us unite under the banner of the swastika* and so on, thus building the ideological and political foundations of the organization, which are also supported by its affiliated groups.

of “atavistic revival”, from which the Pagan Front has actually borrowed some ideological and attitudinal characteristics. Think, for example, about the Heathen Front and, specifically, its German chapter, the Deutsche Heidnische Front founded by Hendrik Möbus of Absurd. In this case, the Pagan Front took the re-



*Pagan Front flyer supporting the liberation of Hendrik Möbus*



Wrapped in an aura of mystery to this day, the Pagan Front proves to be a machine of promotion and propaganda both worrisome and well-structured. A network capable of expanding its influence worldwide and co-opting among its ranks, projects from the four corners of the globe, becoming an alternative production/distribution circuit to the official one in every way, and taking advantage of technological progress to consolidate its presence.

## Notes:

1 - Wodulf, from Aryan Sturm Front.

2 - Among these we should mention the handful of issues of the magazine Heathen Pride, a sort of real house-organ of the movement, in addition to the less accessible (as it was published in Polish only) Wotanjugend. On the graphic front, the work of Kogaion Art has gained much consensus, as they are also responsible for the creation of artwork and logos for bands outside the circle of the Pagan Front.

3 - *The Pagan Front – Return of the Iron Reich of Black Metal*. Excerpt from the liner notes of the booklet of the second volume of the compilation *The Night and the Fog*.

4 - Pagan Front, from Ablaze n.4, May/June 2008.

5 - Ibid.



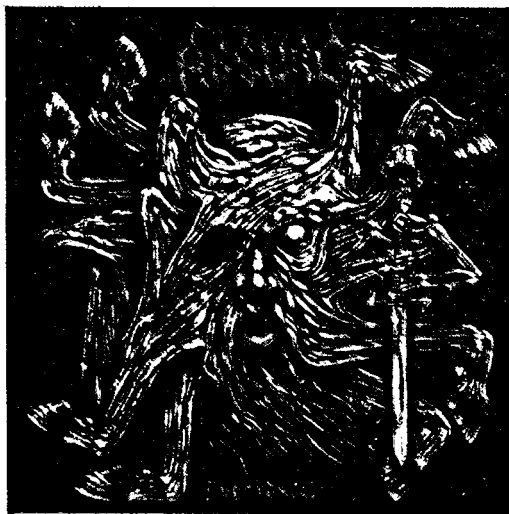
Interview with:

## Hendrik Möbus

**I**n the complex and ever-changing scenario of Nineties' extreme metal, after the season of the arsons and once we entered that process of transition that would see the genre take two distinct directions - on one hand that of large-scale commercialization and on the other that of radicalization at all costs, taking the rudimentary ideological concepts expressed by the early representatives of the genre to the extreme - two characters strongly emerge, imprinting themselves on the collective imagination as the ultimate exacerbation of those anti-system concepts expressed by black metal: Varg Vikernes and Hendrik Möbus. Both with a blood-stained background, both with a charismatic personality and both protagonists of this genre's musical history. Moreover, willing or unwilling, they are both considered NSBM's putative fathers.

Today, Vikernes never misses an opportunity to emphasize the distance that separates him from anything that is even remotely associated to black metal, although banishing the ghosts of a past that has given him notoriety is not a simple task. Diametrically opposite is Möbus' choice: once released from jail, he actively returned to the scene. Abandoning his career as a musician, he started managing Darker Than

Black, which is to this day a label strongly committed to digging into the underground in search of bands that are unfit for the mainstream music industry. Therefore, no one was better qualified than him to help us review the current state of the NSBM scene and the historical origins of this phenomenon.



*The cover of Asgardstrei's reissue on  
Satanic Skinhead Propaganda*

Let's take a step back to your activity as a musician. Absurd are widely considered as the pioneers of the soon to be called NSBM, and albums like *Asgardstrei* had a crucial impact on the scene, paving the way for other bands. How do you relate to this past and its legacy?

I am fine with it. Unlike many others from that era, I have never denounced who I am and what I have done. black metal was meant to be extreme music for extreme characters and it is a logical conclusion that "political extremism" can be included, too. if black metal shall be "more than music", if it shall make an impact on the world beyond the realm of art – then "politics" is a means to this end, as a matter of course. Hence I have never drawn a line and said I, or Absurd for that matter, have to be "unpolitical" or whatever... Quite to the contrary, I think the only line can be drawn when it comes to "politically correct black metal", because that's nothing but an oxymoron. The ideas and ideals that can be found in National Socialism, namely social Darwinism and individual elitism, Aryan supremacy and anti-Judaism, blood mysticism and neo-paganism, among others, do suit black metal very well. Although I am not interested in "party politics" any longer, I do not deny that my world view remains the same more or less and that black metal is one medium for expressing me myself as well as a mirror that does reflect me myself, if you know what I mean...

**During those years you also created Darker Than Black Records. In almost 20 years of activity it has become one of the most long-lasting labels focused on politically incorrect extreme metal, it's been raided and shut down by the police and was finally reborn in 2007. Not exactly the usual routine for a record label. What were your goals then and what are they now?**

Well, I do prefer the old-fashioned position of a patron of arts. Maybe you have noticed that I do sign and produce "newcomers" first and foremost. I want artists and music bands to express their innermost creativity in an environment where they do not need to compromise their artistic vision. Many record companies and music magazines want black metal to be castrated and domesticated for the sake of improved "marketability". From my point of view, that's anathema to the true and original spirit of black metal. D.T.B. Records stands for the freedom of art and expression. There shall be no restrictions imposed on black metal. Contrary to popular belief, I do not necessarily release NSBM bands only. If you look at the release roster and schedule for D.T.B. Records, then you will find all sorts of black/pagan metal there. No band I am working with has to swear allegiance to my own, private worldview. They are free to express themselves how it suits them best. Needless to say, I draw a line where any band would advocate ideas diametrically opposed to the ones I have subscribed to myself. In all the history of the record label, it has never, ever happened that a band and I have had a falling-out over "politics", though.

**And what about your current relationship with the authorities regarding D.T.B.'s activities?**

I am sure they keep monitoring me, and what I am doing. Well, that's one brave new world we are living in, is it not? A music compact disc can be more dangerous than, say, one kilogram of TNT. Words as weapons. Music of mass destruction. For as long as nobody does disturb my circles, I could not care less for what others, the "authorities" included, do think, say or write about D.T.B. Records, though.



How do you see NSBM today and which differences do you see between the current situation and the years when bands like Funeral/Kristallnacht, Absurd or bands from the Temple of Fullmoon moved their first steps?

Well, you will be hard-pressed to find any black metal band that openly admits to being NSBM nowadays. It is only Der Stürmer and Wolfnacht, both from Hellas, that have no problem whatsoever with saying so. Many others, even though they are sympathizers of National Socialism, will insist that their lyrics are about war, genocide, oppression, what-have-you... but not about "politics", as a matter of course. So, there's a difference: In the late Nineties, many bands who

were said (and said so themselves!) to be NSBM did not bother to make any "political statement" whatsoever, but today you have bands making "political statements" that are hell-bent on avoiding the NSBM tag for themselves nonetheless. Alas, that's not even a "wolf in sheep's clothing"-approach but cowardice and opportunism, plain and simple. You want to play with fire but you don't want to get burnt. Well, I am not here to blame anyone, though. To each his own, and I am in a position where my "public reputation" could hardly suffer any more regardless of how I think and feel about National Socialism myself, for instance.

**It's a widespread opinion that NSBM is an extremization of black metal, triggered by the commercialization of the genre, which in turn led to the loss of its primary subversive force. Do you agree with this idea? In this sense could we say that NSBM retrieves BM's original spirit?**

Actually, that's a minority opinion for all I know. However, you hit the nail right on the head! The rise of NSBM started at the same time when black metal experienced a massive commercial exploitation, in the late Nineties. All of a sudden, the bloodshed caused by black metal and the ashes of torched churches left behind did not make a difference any longer, because the "music business", in as far as metal music is concerned, eventually realized you can move tens of thousands of albums of one black metal band. Yes of course, the band would need to be less extreme, less violent and less militant for appealing to an even broader audience. Plenty of bands, in particular from Scandinavia, were willing to sacrifice whatever radical zealotry there was in black metal for the sake of "fame" and "money". Needless to say, this decline of black metal has sparked a new wave of radicalization and extremism among the underground scene. To some bands, the last resort that could effectively withstand the commercialization of black metal was to swear loyalty to National Socialism – if not in lyrics and "band image", then in interviews and statements at the very least. In Western society, there is next to nothing left that a majority of people truly abhor and won't ever tolerate no matter what. You can blaspheme

Jesus Christ and hail Satan, so what? Nobody gives a fuck. You can talk about all sorts of sexual depravity, and they ask for more. In our day and age, it is only National Socialism that shuts all doors and turns all backs on you. Since black metal thrives best in isolation and self-induced hatred against the modern world, resorting to National Socialism as a means to keep untainted the pure essence of the genuine spirit of this particular genre ought not come as a surprise, actually.

**Compared to the Nineties, NSBM seems to be less widespread in Western Europe, while it is very popular in the former Soviet territories, also in the form of pagan metal with racial implications. Do you think the success of the genre in those areas is only due to the years spent under the Communist regime or could there be other reasons?**

Well, if you travel to Russia or Ukraine, then you will experience a lot of sympathy for National Socialism among the young people. Not among the elders who still remember World War II, but the generation of their grandsons and daughters, and especially their children, does have a positive perception of National Socialism actually. They have witnessed, or have been told by their parents, how Bolshevism imploded all by itself and left nothing but economic disaster and spiritual desolation behind. Whereas National Socialism was a vibrant and vital ideology that challenged the world, and thus the world needed to combine the strength of numberless nations to defeat and to eventually crush National Socialism in Germany and elsewhere. That's one reason why National Socialism is so popular in East Europe. If there are "smartasses" over here who belittle this popularity and who call it nuts, because the "Nazis wanted to conquer, to enslave and to kill all Slavs", then it shows they, not the young folks over there, have no clue of history but keep parroting the propaganda hostile to National Socialism. Be that as it may, since you wondered why you have not

so many obvious NSBM bands in West Europe: You have to consider the legal situation in many countries, be them Germany or France or Benelux or Austria... in each one does exist "thought crime" legislation that effectively outlaws any and all "glorification of National Socialism". If a band does not want to be prosecuted, fined or even jailed, then



*A recent picture of Hendrik Möbus*

they will surely attempt to "fly under the radar" so to speak. Sometimes it works, other times it does not.

**As it happened before with black metal, NSBM gained fame and it spread from Central and South America to far Eastern Russia and Southeast Asia. What's your opinion on the large scale diffusion of the genre?**

Well, I will respectfully quote David Myatt in this regard: *«With the defeat of Germany and its allies in the first Zionist war, National Socialism was purified, emerging as a complete way of life, centered around honour, loyalty and duty. The political compromises needed to achieve power were gone, as were the supporters who did not understand or live up to the ideals of National Socialism. The essence emerged as the shell covering the essence was destroyed in the crucible of that war. People who have described this essence include Savitri Devi, Miguel Serrano, and Leon Degrelle. Since we now consciously understand this essence, it is possible to create - and only now possible to create - a genuine National Socialist society. This would be an entirely new type of society and while the inspiration would be National Socialist Germany, it would in many ways be very different, although it would manifest the same ethos, the same ideals»*. That being said, I do not believe National Socialism in general and NSBM in particular ought to be limited to, say, Germany or European countries. However, the racial component cannot be faded out completely. If mongrels or Jews would be playing NSBM, then I'd consider this a really odd choice of genre for any of them. Since National Socialism, and thus NSBM too, is about blood (= descent) and soil (= origin) first and foremost, you would have to relate to this tradition in one way or another or else it is out of question you do realize - much less, comprehend - what this ideology is all about.

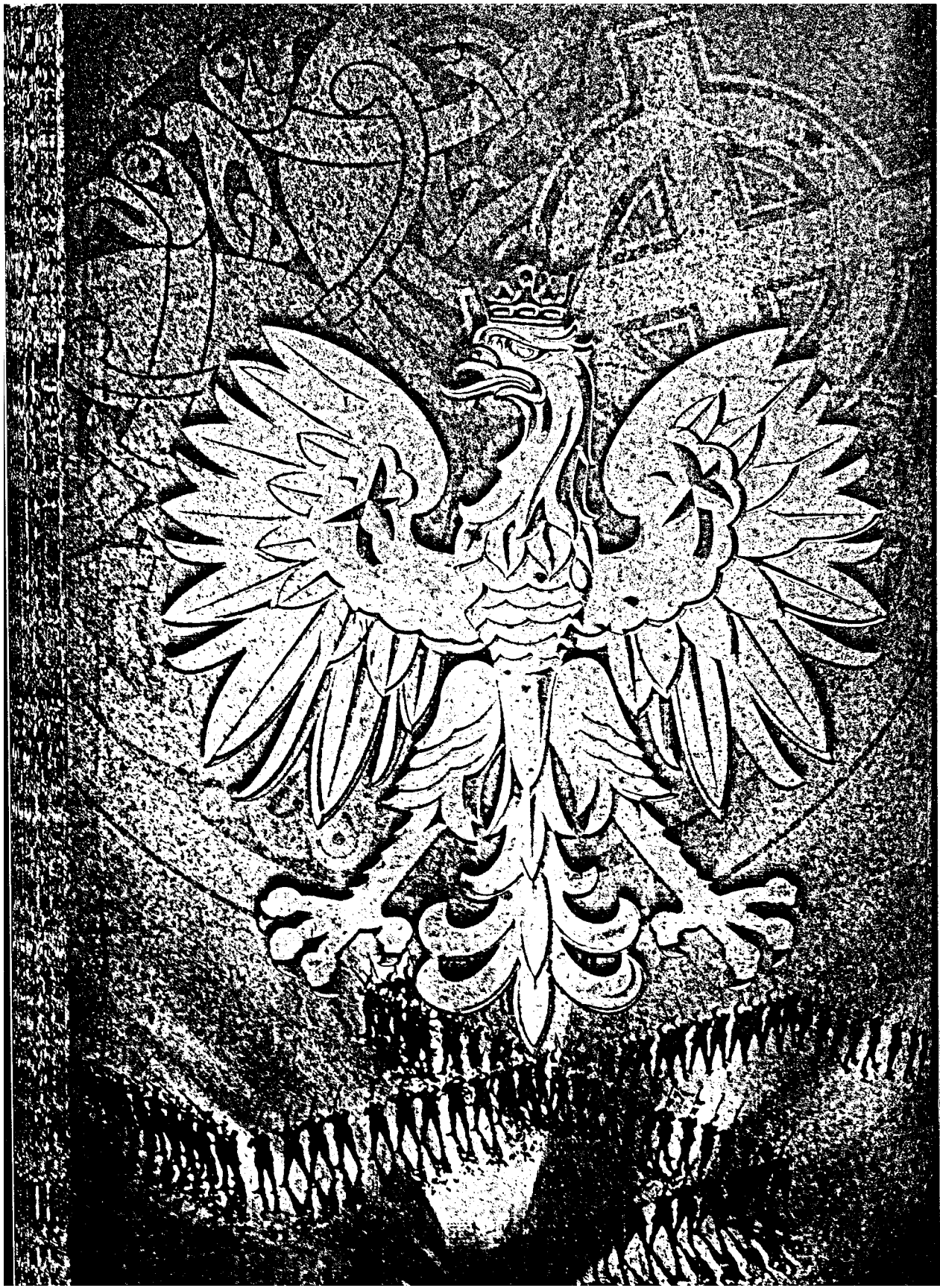
**Today, the NSBM label seems to include various ideas: paganism, white supremacism, social Darwinism, Traditionalism, Nazi mysticism and all types of nationalism. According to you, are there any "requirements" that define a band as NSBM? Considering the variety of themes presented by such bands, does the prefix NS still make sense?**

There's only one requirement I can think of right now: Namely, a band has to say they are NSBM to begin with. If you just look at the private worldview of musicians, then you could rightfully say Burzum too is NSBM even though Varg Vikernes would certainly disagree with this assessment, because Burzum is not about "politics". However, you have plenty bands with obvious references to World War II or to NS Germany that still deny to be NSBM or to be "political" at all. Be that as it may, the prefix NS does make sense now as before. It's like a badge of honour; it proves you are at war with the powers-that-be while all alone in a hostile world.

**The growing "political threat" has also brought heavy metal in the sights of antifa organizations that started to hinder certain bands/events. Is it a problem that concerns Germany too?**

Yes, we have similar problems in Germany, but truth be told, I do not deem it negative if black metal is considered to be a "menace to society" and dealt with accordingly. So-called "Antifa" is making much noise over black metal and many bands, even the popular

ones signed to major record labels, encounter problems due to a "guilt by association". That's nothing to be deplored, though. A music genre so firmly opposed to the modern world and each and everything that does uphold the status quo, how could it be less than marginalized and boycotted by the "mainstream society", I do wonder? How the "politically correct" ones react to black metal, all of their revulsion and antagonism, that's the way this music genre, the bands and the fans alike, ought to be dealt with, actually. I would only be concerned if it was the other way around, with black metal being widely tolerated and absorbed by "mainstream society". That would prove this music genre lost its edge, and thus the *raison d'être* too. For all I care, this must never happen. And for as long as I am here, running D.T.B. Records among others, I will see to it that black metal remains a genuine counter-culture meant to challenge, and to ultimately overcome, the reality we are forced to live in.





# Sinistrum Polska

## The voice of blood

*«THE ENERGY AND WILL OF THEIR BLOOD WILL TRIUMPH ONE DAY AND WILL PUT AN END TO THE ENEMY'S PLANS OF ANNIHILATION OF THE WHITE RACE AND WESTERN CIVILIZATION»<sup>1</sup>*

[GRAVELAND]

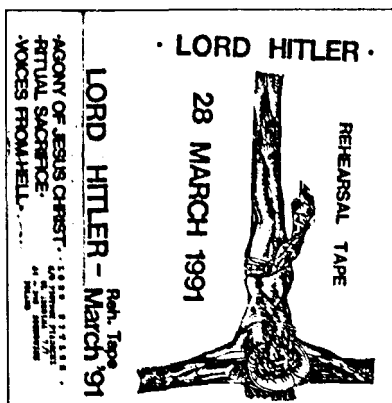
**E**urope, 1939. Poland played a vital role in the complicated and unstable geopolitical scenario of that time, as it was the center of the expansionist ambitions of both Nazi Germany and the USSR. Those interests were put down on paper on August 23, 1939, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, also known as the Hitler-Stalin Pact, was signed in Moscow. The fundamental non-aggression treaty between the German Reich and the Soviet Union bound the two sides to a policy of non-belligerence and, among other directives, it laid the guidelines for a possible partition of Poland. The German invasion began on September 1, 1939, and on September 17 the troops of the Red Army crossed the State borders, taking possession of their areas of interest. On October 6, Poland ceased to be an independent State and became a territory divided in half.

At the end of World War II, the whole nation came under the control of the USSR until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. This half-century spent as a Soviet satellite State created a deeply wounded nation, full of anger and unprepared to withstand the impact of the social and economic changes that were already taking place across the continent, along with the advent of cultural models that were completely foreign to it. If we add to this troubled past the enormous power that the Catholic Church has always held in Poland, which became even stronger after the election to the papacy of John Paul II, the longest-lasting and beloved Pope of modern times, we have a perfect scenario in which the flame of black metal could flare up.

Moreover, on an international level, the Polish scene has probably become second only to the Norwegian one in terms of numbers and historical importance. One major difference being that it managed to maintain a considerable amount of "underground integrity" in spite of the lure of the recording industry, which failed to smooth over some of its rough edges. In addition, it ended up confronting a growing crossover between black metal and the skinhead scene, with a convergence of means, forces and ideas that had previously never manifested themselves with such clarity. Although the roots of black metal were firmly planted - the outgrowth of studs, corpse paint and



grainy black and white photos has also been an unavoidable trademark in Poland. This unlikely merger took place in the wake of a pagan revival that was the common ground on which a fellowship between music and politics was built. But all of this happened far away from the limelight, which back then was just focusing on the events in Norway. So this enabled the first great extreme music scene in the Eastern European territories to develop without limits of any kind.



If we look back at the primary expressions of Nazi radicalism (albeit still ascribed to a purely provocative attitude) in the Polish metal scene, we come across the first and only demo of Lord Hitler which was released in less suspicious times, back in March 1991. In truth, in spite of a name that is difficult to ignore, the contents reveal acute but harmless death metal that contains vague proto-black metal reminiscences that do not depart from the usual baggage of religious insults, and its peculiarity ends with the weird and completely gratuitous choice of moniker.

The progeny of bands that were coming to life in those years was on a whole different level: with the fall of the Berlin Wall and unfiltered access to the seething magma of music and culture that was inflaming the rest of Europe, Poland immediately proved extremely receptive and permeable to the revolutionary impulses that traveled all the way down the continent from Scandinavia. The rules of the Inner Circle took root very easily in the extreme underground, creating several bands not only devoted to black metal but also to the resultant arsons, suicides and murders that made their Nordic ancestors sadly famous. Later on, in response to the historical context and as the zenith of an anti-system fervour, a strong ideological component found its way, which contaminated the entire music scene in question for the first time: no longer a single maverick, as Varg Vikernes was in Norway, but an organic coven of bands operating according to a Nazi-satanic combination - at least initially - leaning towards the frantic search for a fierce integralism.

In order to better understand one of the most extreme and varied music scenes that emerged at the end of the last century in its entirety, we must start with the big picture, in an attempt to join the pieces of musical archeology that were taken from various interviews with the protagonists of the time in a coherent manner. Away from the spotlight that lit up the Vikernes and Möbus cases, and without all that scandalous tabloid material in terms of statements and photographic evidence, much of what happened in Poland is now part of a saga entrusted to oral histories. It is as if they were ancient popular traditions passed down from generation to generation, stored in dozens of fanzines, preserving

an aura of myth that created the fortune of the genre in its early days.

One certain fact is that 1991 saw the birth of the seminal band Lord of Evil. Formed in the city of Gdynia, in the far north of the country, their musical and ideological journey exemplifies precisely what would later happen on a larger scale and on a national level, helping to create the myth of Poland as a primary stronghold of NSBM. The band has written caustic and abrasive black metal, barely toned down by sparse melodies and rhythmic passages, contrasted by splinters of unusual brutality with an almost grind angle that dissolve in a matter of seconds (an

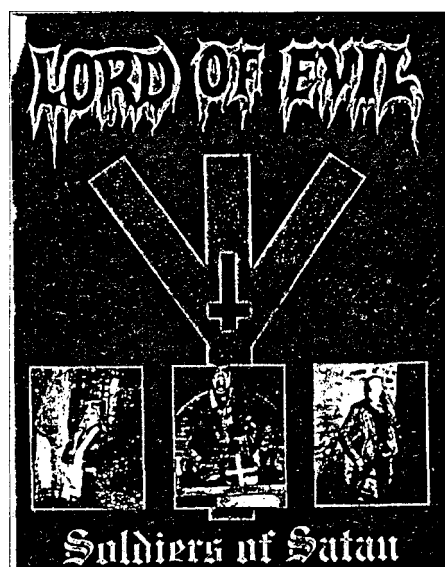
example being songs like *Nazi Killer*, in which the verse "Kill the ZOG!" is continually reiterated). The band's first demos, *In Nomine Rex Infernus*, *Kill for Satan* and *Satanic War Master (Der Führer)* already show a Nazi-satanic mixture that is the perfect sum of the



Lord of Evil

genre in its early years of existence: diabolical references and swastikas, inverted crosses and corpse paint to go along with other references to Adolf Hitler and exhortations to nuclear war, demonstrating a corollary of anti-Christian invectives that are blatantly antisocial and are typical of the most ferocious black metal, before the acronym NSBM was even contemplated.

After just a few years, the band completely rejected Satanism in all its forms, changing its name to War88 (an acronym for "White Aryan Resistance Heil Hitler"), and updating its look to the combination of "black bomber jacket and shaved head" while showing up at the head of a handful of bands lined up under the shadow of the swastika. The compilation *Gottenhafen Kommando* is a testimony to this, with the participation of War88/Lord of



Flyer for the release of Lord of Evil's demo collection *Soldiers of Satan*

Evil, Kohort, Hodur, Empire and Thorn, sweeping away any misunderstanding with such songs as *Black Sun*, *Gammadion* (a word that means "swastika" in Greek), *Unpure Race*

<b>GOTTENHAFFEN KOMMANDO</b>	<p><b>GOTTENHAFFEN KOMMANDO</b></p> <p><b>GOTTENHAFFEN KOMMANDO</b></p> <p><b>WAR 88</b> „The dawn of mortal edge” '94  <b>KOHOHT</b> „Infinity” '95  <b>TIHORN</b> „...and she's a Jewish” '94  <b>HÖHUR</b> „Wilczyca z SS” '95  <b>LORD OF EVIL</b> „Ganmedion” '93  <b>EMPIRE</b> „Hidden” '92  <b>WAR 88</b> „Black sun” '94  <b>KOHOHT</b> „Divine massacre” '95  <b>TIHORN</b> „Slavonic heretic” '94  <b>HÖHUR</b> „Unsure once (fuck Jews fuck)” '96  <b>LORD OF EVIL</b> „Warriors of night” '93  <b>EMPIRE</b> „Silence ominous silence” '93</p> <p><b>OUTRO</b> - Argonnen Wald um Mitternacht</p>	<p><b>WAR 88 (ex - LORD OF EVIL)</b>          Arkadius Pieper          Schimmelreiterweg 24          22149 Hamburg          Germany  <b>TIHORN</b>          Simon Maternicki          Ul. PLK. Dabka 203 F/19          81 155 Gdynia          Poland  <b>HÖHUR</b>          Kamil Krzek          Ul. Unruha 90 G/6          81 153 Gdynia          Poland  <b>KOHOHT</b>.....R.I.P.  <b>EMPIRE</b>.....R.I.P.</p>	<p><b>WHITE POWER!</b></p> <p><b>NSDAP/AO: Box 6414,          Lincoln, NE 68506 USA</b></p>
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(*Fuck Jews Fuck*) and a cover showing a black swastika on a white background. Indeed, such a straightforward graphic seems to be purposeful, in order to create distance from the satanic milieu of the early years and clearly state a new ideological affiliation.

Under the moniker War88, the band also released a tape called *White Aryan Resistance* (1995), which was, in fact, a collection of the same songs already recorded as Lord of Evil. That material will be reissued countless times, both in retrospective compilations (the last one titled *Satan's Soldiers* was just released in 2012) and in the form of a split album with relevant bands of the NS circle such as Pantheon and Der Stürmer. Although their activity is essentially circumscribed to four fiery years between 1991 and 1995, Lord of Evil/War88 are still one of the most revered NSBM bands.



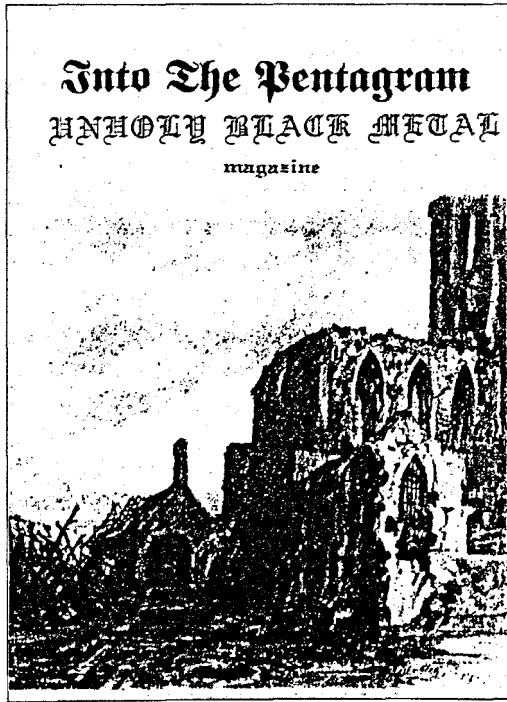
*A teaser of the graphics used for Lord of Evil's last collection, Satan's Soldiers (2012)*



On another front, the efforts for a first functional attempt at aggregation within the black metal scene led to the birth of The Temple of Infernal Fire<sup>2</sup>, a small, more or less satanic organization, created by Nergal of Behemoth, Blasphemous of Veles and Venom of Xantotol. The latter, one of the pioneers of the black metal scene, turned out to be one of the most interesting underground bands. This due to their ability to synthesize a particular sound, not yet fully bent to the Nordic style, that emerged with vehemence from the three demos recorded by the band (*Glory for Centuries*, *Cult of the Black Pentagram* and *Thus Spake Zarathustra*), containing themes apparently mediated by the esoteric maelstrom that was gaining ground and proselytes among the young followers of metal. *Homo Galacticus*, a song that is on the tape *Cult of the Black Pentagram* released in 1993, takes us straight to the mystical and esoteric theories of David Myatt promulgated by the Order of Nine Angles. As a further confirmation of these connections, the same tape is dedicated to Friedrich Nietzsche and Faustus Scorpions of the Order of the Left Hand Path, the organization which the members of Xantotol were a part of:

*«Our deep engagement in "Order of the Left Hand Path", and very concrete knowledge in this matter, caused something unique, and perhaps not repeated today. Xantotol was something like an institution, propagating these specified values. At that time we were strongly connected with "Order of the Left Hand Path", "Order of Nine Angles" or "Luciferian Light Group"»<sup>3</sup>.*

The presence of the Order of the Left Hand Path turns out to be pivotal: based on an agreement between the parties, various material prepared by the order was distributed among those who requested it, thus transforming the The Temple of Infernal Fire into the first and main vehicle for spreading texts related to Satanism, occultism and related ideas. Requests went beyond the most optimistic expectations and imposed a change of pace which translated into an expansion of the organization, a move which would prove to be short-sighted. With the gradual loss of the hermetic connotation which is typical of an initiatory order, inevitable disagreements about the direction to follow proliferated, and the original characteristics were lost, leaving the field open to a significant process of mutation.



*Into the Pentagram, Capricornus' fanzine*

One of the main culprits of this transition was Maciej Dąbrowski, aka Capricornus, who was also active in the ranks of the Sinister Order of Fenrir, for which he curated several themed publications - Atheosophia, Sturm, Lucifer and, on the music side, the "famous" Into the Pentagram - as well as a variety of associational and organizational activities. Capricornus turned out to be one of the most influential figures in reworking the ideology of the "temple", adding some explicit ideas of National Socialist origin to the already rooted satanic heritage. The new course quickly gained favor with the members of the organization (in part because of the search for the extreme at all costs, and in part because of political beliefs), which at that point could rely on a small group of devoted affiliates close to this new line of thought - which will not always be manifested artistically. Thus The Temple of Fullmoon (henceforth TTF) was born, a sort of ideological laboratory in which totalitarianism and occultism are cleverly mixed with satanic bloodlines and pagan beliefs, Nietzsche's thought and the Social Darwinism advocated by Ragnar Redbeard, and also - as an obvious consequence of the black metal background of its members - all those anti-Christian invectives which will then result in para-terrorist actions against the church institutions<sup>4</sup>.

The importance of what is happening, and the speed with which the TTF goes from words to action, are echoed in the pages of those specialized publications we have already mentioned in a previous chapter, and which constituted the main vehicle to promulgate ideas and information within the esoteric-Fascist circle. In an article that appeared in The Nexus, Mateusz Piskorski - who at the time was also part of the Sinister Order of Fenrir - focuses on what is happening in Poland, identifying the TTF as the most influential movement that is able to unite esotericism and paganism with Nazi ideology in order to *«disrupt and crush the zionist occupational system by all means appropriate»*<sup>5</sup>. The many initiatives of the two organizations, both in terms of propaganda and the ability to forge new alliances with other dissidents (such as the German Teutonic Brotherhood), led Piskorski to provide an overall picture about the state of health of this fledgling scene and emphasize its maximalist attitude:

*«The NS satanic movement is quite strong in Poland, undoubtedly the strongest in Eastern Europe, comparable to the sinister scene in Germany and Britain. Moreover, Polish NS are usually fanatical, willing to sacrifice their lives for ideals»*.

Conceptual frills aside, the music scene that revolves around this environment turns out to be dark, reluctant to compromise, dangerously fundamentalist, and stylistically adherent to the canons of primeval black metal. As one group rose to prominence, namely Rob Darken's Graveland, a myriad of projects devoted to an oppressive and extreme sound with black hues (and later to an ideological extremism too) were formed: Thunderbolt, Infernum, Veles, Thor's Hammer, Perunwit, Gontyna Kry, Galgenberg, Mysteries, Fullmoon and other self-appointed guardians of the most uncontaminated and absolutist underground spirit, instigators of an insane season of struggles against

institutions (social and religious) that is almost unparalleled. In this seething cauldron, several seminal albums took shape. Often relegated onto tapes with very poor circulation, they helped to define a recognizable sound, and made Poland a non-negligible country in the balance of forces on the map of continental black metal. The inherent subversive vocation of the genre, sharpened by this new multi-faceted organizational dimension, brought the representatives of the TTF to synthesize a philosophy of life, that saw in black metal, a tool with which to undermine the dogmas and weaknesses of a society that did not guarantee the comforts and facilities of the advanced Scandinavian countries, and was further destabilized by great social, political and economic changes. They also sought practical ways to safeguard the integrity and the intransigence of the scene:

*«All the things that were part of extreme radical underground ideologies... burning churches and holy war against Christianity, black lists of enemies, anti-LaVey and anti-Church of Satan movement, Nazism mixed with Satanism - the highest evil, war expeditions against traitors and poseurs... all these actions had only one aim: to terrorize the scene and stop the destructive fashion for BM. Organizing black inner circles and legions of supermen and legions of slaves... all these ideas were taken from Norwegian BM scene.*

*We had a leader who no one has ever seen and no one knew... and he was responsible for all our deeds and actions. Some people from TTF spread and created false information about his existence. This way "Baron de Belem" was the most evil and dangerous of all of us... hababa... and all that should be afraid of him were afraid»<sup>7</sup>.*

This new and more uncompromising direction of the TTF immediately reaped illustrious victims. Nergal was among the first to leave and, as we will see later, he became the target of a hate campaign - hardly matched in the underground scene - progressively embittered by the success of his band. Even Xantotol decided to keep on following their own path, away from a scene that was starting to consolidate; Venom's words suggest that the evolutionary process that led to the formation of the TTF out of the ashes of the previous organization was in fact frowned upon:

*«[The TTF] became a shelter for wranglers, careerists and demagogues being something like an advertising agency for black metal "stars". [...] The "Temple Of Fullmoon" adversity was easy to forecast. TOF was absorbed by chaos and a fight for power inside the organization»<sup>8</sup>.*

The para-terrorist activities implemented by the TTF did not go unnoticed, and the police began to monitor this new dissident movement, along with the entire black metal milieu. The investigations affected the scene deeply, with several arrests for many different reasons, ranging from simple vandalism in a drunken state (members of Fullmoon were arrested when, after a recording session, they got drunk and began to

destroy some parked cars<sup>9</sup>) to the "canonical" fire damage to the churches<sup>10</sup>, as well as the unauthorized demonstrations and murders. Darken recalls how the first members of the "temple" to end up behind bars were Samoth and Leinad of Mysteries, both widely considered two of the most extreme personalities of the TTF and for this reason, highly respected in the scene for their attitude, even more than for their music (black metal that heavily borrows from Burzum)<sup>11</sup>.

The epilogue of this short but intense season marked by chaos came in 1995, during a meeting in the town of Szklarska Poręba. The members of The Temple of Fullmoon paraded through the city center, carrying banners with swastikas and eagles, until they reached the designated place for the meeting, a wooded area near where they were supposed to camp. However, during the second day the police intervened and arrested several participants, seizing various flyers, magazines and promotional materials. The blitz marked the end



*Picture of a demonstration by  
The Temple of Fullmoon / Sinister Order of Fenrir in July 1995*

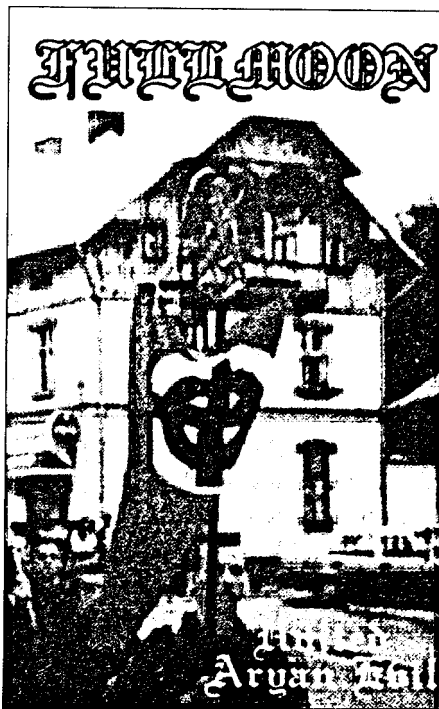


*One of the pictures taken during the infamous meeting of the TTF  
in Szklarska Poręba in 1995*

of the TTF, which was officially dissolved: many bands disappeared or dissociated themselves from the ideologies they had supported until then, others migrated to less controversial organizations or abandoned the underground altogether, ending an era that was in fact destined to remain in the chronicles of music extremism in Poland.

«These people who created the Polish cult scene do not exist anymore in the underground. Most of them had big problems with the law and they were not able to return to normal life. They were too radical and they treated life as chaos and an eternal fight. It led them to the way of crimes.. and finally they had to pay for it. The members of TTF were absolutely dark and dangerous. They inspired one another in their extreme ideas... war, evil, destruction and hatred... everything was approved and considered highly valuable. TTF meetings were very extreme. We will never forget these meetings»<sup>12</sup>.

Although the experience of the TTF has definitely concluded, its musical legacy is not lost, just like the ideological fury that permeated some of the bands that were active in that period. Among them, one of the names that more than any other is carved in the collective imagination, is Fullmoon; the band released nothing more than a handful of demos honoring the purest and most visceral underground faith. One tape in particular can be considered a pure expression of the Polish NSBM sound: *United Aryan Evil* (1995), on whose cover is a picture of the illegal demonstration that preceded the meeting in Szklarska Poręba. The demo,



*The cover of Fullmoon's demo United Aryan Evil.  
The picture was taken during a demonstration  
by the TTF in 1995*



*Tauron, Lord Xaquoreth and Diathyrron of Fullmoon*



reissued on CD in 2005 by Blutreinheit, is one of the most chilling and evil ever recorded, and is able to recreate scenes of rare unrest through a bare and unadorned sound: atmospheric black metal with veiled references to the Scandinavian style, supported by guitar work that unravels between melancholic melodies and epic reminiscences. In the cryptic lyrics that come from Lord Xaquoreth's abysmal screaming there is no explicit political reference, but the title of the record itself, the intro *Aryans Ride Over Falling Israel*, and the future activities of some of the members, wipe away every doubt.

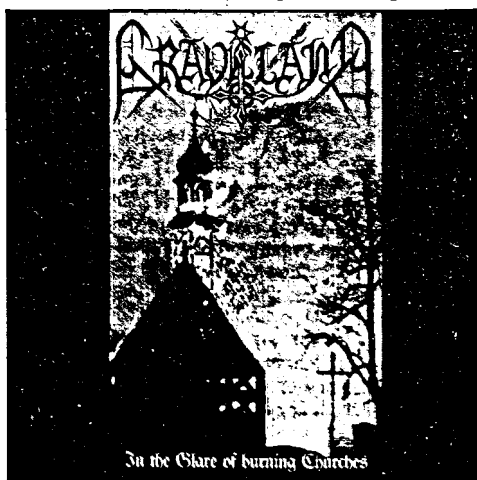


If in terms of sound, and especially aesthetics, Fullmoon's demo became a sort of manifesto of what was the essence of the TTF, it was Robert Fudali aka Rob Darken who, more than any other, helped shape a style that later became a real trademark. His main creature, Graveland, went through those years as a protagonist, experiencing the changes and ideological tensions that permeated the genre firsthand, tracing an actual path that crosses the entire black metal galaxy both in terms of sounds and ideas. The name choice underlines a major theme, which is destined to emerge with all its strength later on:

*«The name Graveland comes from the times of my early fascinations of Celtic culture and beliefs. Graveland, according to Celtic legends, is something like Tir Na Nog or Mag Mar, the land to which the dead come... this name symbolizes my early fascination of darkness and melancholy»<sup>13</sup>.*

Formed in 1992, in Wrocław, the first steps of this one-man band consist of some demos that became the milestones of an entire scene. Despite the technical skills being almost non-existent, *Necromanteion* and *Drunemeton* are harbingers of sulphurous and deep atmospheres, with omnipresent and sinister keyboards that will become a characteristic trait not only of Graveland, but of the entire Polish black metal scene. Many collaborations will see Darken as a keyboard player or composer of symphonic intros (Fullmoon, Veles, Infernum, and also Absurd, for *Asgardsrei*).

However, the minimalist black metal of the early years, that sometimes veered towards doom or ambient, was destined to wane in 1993, with the release of *Epilogue*, the fourth and final chapter of



what might be considered an embryonic stage of the project. 1993 was indeed a momentous year, not only for the evolution of Graveland, but for the development of the whole rising black metal movement of the East: Darken's musical path crossed with Capricornus', and the two released the demo *In the Glare of Burning Churches*, one of the absolute cornerstones of Polish black metal. The sound became rougher and more aggressive, the keyboards painted catastrophic landscapes and the guitars abandoned the atmospheric tones to forge scratchy and sulfurous riffs. The songs, almost all rhythmic and with a tumultuous pace which will be characteristic of many bands of that scene, never degenerated into violence for its own sake, but what it lacked in terms of angry speed was overcome by a cold feeling on which Darken's screaming stood out, shooting arrows of fire on the Christian enemy:

*«Black the ultimate colour, darkness the only aim  
evil the proper impulse, death the only mercy*

*Nothing was forgotten and nothing will be ever forgotten  
all those who raised their swords against odious christianity  
will live forever in dark legend»<sup>14</sup>*

As we said, at this stage the greatest inspiration came from the events in Scandinavia, and the legend of the crimes that surrounded the Inner Circle. Therefore, the aesthetics were also inherited, as proven by the cover choice for the reissue of the record by No Colours, which shows a church on fire. Inside the booklet, a bare epitaph warns: *«Cover include photos showing pagan reality in Poland 1994-95. War still lasts...»*.

In the end, this work proved to be a turning point. It not only marked the start of a new life cycle for Graveland, but also the beginning of a turbulent and complicated period, in which Satanism, Nazism and problems with the authorities became a reality to contend with.

In 1994, the band consisted of three elements, all of whom will, in one way or another, prove essential in the continuation of our story: Darken, Capricornus and Karcharoth. The latter two were responsible for the abandonment of the Celtic themes and the integration of Satanism and National Socialism in the band's background; ideologies that were also shared by Darken back then and were boasted as a symbol of underground integrity. Symbolic and often referred to when the band is discussed, is the interview he did with Resistance Magazine:

*«Without a doubt I belong to those who think Adolf Hitler is the biggest figure in European history of the last years. Hitler and his advisors tried to create a great masterpiece of social order. [...] Hitler tried to build an empire similar to that of the Roman Empire, based on pagan worth and values and beliefs and traditions of Aryan Europe»<sup>16</sup>.*

Graveland then released two other seminal works: the demo *The Celtic Winter*, marred by a recording full of unexpected events (which ended with some real ideological clashes between the band and the technicians who worked on the recording), and the official debut, the equally essential *Carpathian Wolves*, which marks an important milestone in the transition to epic and wild pagan black metal. This sound will find its highest expression in *Thousand Swords* and *Following the Voice of Blood*, two records incorporating folk influences that will catch on in the years to come, without disregarding the fury of the performance and the black metal roots. These albums are the highlights of the band's career for many, and with the following album they will clearly change their style, almost making a clean break with black metal, only to land in territories that are closer in line with Bathory's *Hammerheart* or, more recently, a band like Falkenbach.

The next record, *Immortal Pride* (the last album with the participation of Capricornus, already mentioned as a session musician) is therefore a new beginning for Graveland, that from this moment on will become a full projection of Fudali's personality, both musically and on a lyrical level. The album consists of four long suites of pure pagan and belligerent metal, with battle samplings and an evocative atmosphere that recalls the soundscapes of Basil Poledouris (consciously or unconsciously honored in the intro *Day of Fury*) and the imagery that revolves around Howard's *Conan*, a source of

inspiration widely recognized and celebrated on several occasions.

More interesting, in regards to our field of research, are some collaborations Fudali did over the years, impromptu operations on a different level when compared to the relentless march undertaken with the release of the following works. The year 2000 found Darken's project forging an alliance with Resistance Records - a label tied to the white power milieu, whose troubled history we



will deal with in greater detail later - in the form of a split album with fellow compatriots Honor, a major band in the Polish skinhead scene.

At that time, the local skinhead scene was going through ups and downs: the Nineties were years of great expansion, with well-known bands like Honor and Konkwista 88 joined by a massive team of young talents and a remarkable presence of militants scattered throughout the territory. However, with the turn of the millennium there was a strong change of scenery, with only a few bands still active and a reality that called for both generational change and new alliances<sup>17</sup>. It was in this context of partial disorientation that the relations between the skinhead and NSBM scenes were strengthened, and the split album between Honor and Graveland established the first clear sign of convergence between the extreme Right, normally linked to the skinhead scene, and new members of the ideologized branch of black metal. As Darken himself said:

*«This split was a big event causing pretty great commotion in our scene. We were very satisfied with listeners' reactions to this split. At the time, the Polish pagan metal scene was pretty strong. It started to radicalize and support Right-wing ideologies. Some metal fans listened to Honor at that time. Our split broke down a barrier of hostility between skinheads and long-hair metal fans. The situation has changed. Since then, in pagan rituals and patriotic demonstrations, skinheads and long-hair metal fans appeared shoulder to shoulder. Such things had never taken place in the past. After the release of this split, we started to have big problems with the police and secret services. Finally Honor suspended activity and the Polish pagan metal scene was weakened»<sup>18</sup>.*

In the same year, the follow up to *Immortal Pride* was released and in a way, it was a revolutionary record on an ideological level. Its title, *Creed of Iron*, pays tribute to one of the key texts of the Wotansvolk movement, founded by Katja Lane and Ron McVan under the direct influence of David Lane's thought, the infamous creator of the "14 Words"<sup>19</sup>:



*Rob Darken, promo picture  
from the Creed of Iron period (2000)*

*«I created Creed of Iron inspired by Wotansvolk book Creed of Iron written by Ron McVan. Many of us inspired by new perspectives of religions and beliefs of our ancestors*

walk the way of wisdom and knowledge that come from deep spiritual beginnings of our race and nations. Our Slavic lands' young generations try to revive ancestors' beliefs. Fire burns in our forefathers' holy cult places. Young warriors meet in order to fight and that way become closer to nature of our heathenish ancestors. They leave eternal marks of native beliefs and culture that will not be destroyed by Judeo-Christianity ever again. Those who try to stop us are late [...]»<sup>20</sup>.



Rob Darken

At the turn of the millennium, Darken's project was also subject to an unexpected "promotional campaign" in an episode of *West Wing*, an American TV series created by producer Aaron Sorkin and shown on NBC. Set in the West Wing of the White House (hence the title), the show is built around the story of a hypothetical Democratic President and his staff. In episode number 18 of the first season, aired on April 5, 2000, the White House security consultants hold a briefing to discuss the threat from groups belonging to the white power movement; they mention some letters received and signed with the aforementioned slogan of "14 Words" and the phrase «*Following the voice of blood*» is repeatedly mentioned, which Intelligence experts acknowledge to be «*the title of the first record of a band called Graveland, which*



is very popular among skinheads». This goes to show that Darken's band was perceived as tied to extreme Right circles even in the more mainstream areas of popular imagination.

In 2002, another rather disturbing release helped us understand the ideological framework that hides behind the band: through a new partnership with Richard Mills' Vinland Winds, *Blood of Heroes* saw the light, a limited edition 7" in 1488 numbered copies - obviously not a random number. As written in the booklet of the reissue released in 2004 by No Colours, there was a very specific ideological concept behind this EP:

«Originally, the EP *Blood of Heroes* was to be dedicated to Timothy McVeigh, who is the true hero of America for me. Release of the EP coincided with the 11th of September. So I had to change this dedication. I did not want Vinland Winds Records from New York,

*who were to release this EP, to have any problems with the special police. Timothy McVeigh was sentenced to death and executed 3 months before 11th of September, 11 06 2001. Glory to heroes!»*

Timothy James McVeigh was an American terrorist found guilty of having been the perpetrator of the Oklahoma City bombing of April 19, 1995, and sentenced to death (Terry Nichols, his accomplice and supporter, was given a life sentence, while the other character involved, Terry James, was released for lack of evidence). Before the attack on the Twin Towers, the Oklahoma City bombing was the terrorist act that had claimed the most victims on American soil: that morning they counted 168 dead, including 19 children. The decision to dedicate a record to such a controversial character tied to a dramatic act of violence relates to the path that led Rob Darken to distance himself from sterile political party issues and create a worldview linked to a form of dissidence against the current society and the aspects that he considered as negative (multiculturalism, lobbies, corporatism). In this sense, McVeigh, who blew up the Murrah Federal Building as a form of retaliation to a State perceived as hostile towards its own citizens, became a symbolic figure of the white dissident for Darken.

In its twenty-year long career, Graveland has completed an ideological and musical course that expresses an exemplary mutation of paradigm. From the satanic beginning to the pro-Nazi utterances particularly in vogue in the years of The Temple of Fullmoon, Fudali has gained a pagan worldview that ignores national peculiarities, in the belief that the Slavic, Germanic or, more generally, European traditions are the common heritage of the peoples of the continent; a pan-European vision founded on the ideas of David Lane and the Wotansvolk, which implies the need to throw off the Judeo-Christian yoke (including political interferences) and rebuild a polytheistic society linked to the concepts of "blood and soil". This ideological system certainly puts Fudali's thought to the extreme Right and, by extension, it has made Graveland one of the most recognized and renowned projects within the NSBM scene.





*Karcharoth in a promo picture for Graveland's album  
Thousand Swords (1995)*

a sort of alternative embodiment of Graveland, from which some stylistic elements of the *Thousand Swords* period were extrapolated. The record also showed signs of a creeping ideology (in particular *Gammadion* and *Meine Ehre heißt Treue*), which was very popular in the years of the TTF.

However, there were many problems awaiting the band, due to Karcharoth's complex and sometimes unstable personality. In fact, he turned out to be one of the most extreme characters in the underground and was one of the most outspoken supporters of the need to propagate hatred and chaos in society. As told by Darken himself, some members of Thunderbolt's first line-up committed criminal acts under his influence. The problems became more serious when Jurgielewicz began to show signs of an imbalance due to schizophrenia and a paranoid attitude, likely exacerbated by the police investigations into the rising black metal movement in which he was directly involved:

*«Karcharoth had a mental breakdown, the police started to investigate us and our instincts for survival stopped us for a while and showed us other ways...Karcharoth ended the relationship with us...changed his ideas and started to be keen*

As previously mentioned, the years of militancy within the TTF were marked by a large degree of collaboration between the members of the "temple". During this period, Darken acted as real binding agent between different realities, attending recordings and participating as a keyboardist on the albums of several bands including Grzegorz Jurgielewicz's *Infernum* (who in this case uses the pseudonym Anextiomarus, while in Graveland he is known as Karcharoth). For the debut *...Taur-Nu-Fuin...* (1994) he recruited Darken\* and Capricornus, making the band



on Communism!!! His schizophrenia destroyed him. His trip to Norway in order to kill Fenriz is just one of the proofs of his sickness»<sup>21</sup>.

Here Darken refers to an anecdote that perfectly illustrates Karcharoth's gradual descent into a spiral of madness. According to reports, he tried to reach Norway with the intent to kill Fenriz of Darkthrone, guilty of stealing some CDs from him. Fully armed with knives, chains and so on, he reached the northern border of the State, where he boarded a ferry to Sweden. Upon his arrival he inevitably roused the suspicions of the police, who arrested and later deported him, blowing up his delirious plan.

This is a prime example of a behaviour increasingly prone to paranoia suffered by Jurgielewicz, who was lost in obsessions of plots hatched against him, going as far as imagining himself hunted by emissaries of the KGB - a mindset that is definitely not suitable for someone attending extreme Right organizations as the Temple of Fullmoon was in those years. It is at this stage that Karcharoth decided to move away from the black metal scene and become a police informer: he accused various affiliates of the organization of criminal activities including arson, Nazi propaganda and murder (two members of the TTF were arrested and held in custody for 48 hours due to his statements), and reported the theory that Darken and Lord Xaquoreth of Fullmoon were planning his murder to the police<sup>22</sup>.

## GRZEGORZ JURGIELEWICZ - BETRAIER.

This article focuses latest events concerning Grzegorz Jurgielewicz known under pseudonyms - Anepiclonus or Karcharoth - ex-leader of Black Metal band Invernum and ex-band player in Cavendish. This man betrayed us and all our ideas. All what he did is full of affect and hypocrisy chosen coming to the limit of madness. He accused members of Cavendish and Fullmoon of accomplices of murder he was to be a victim of that murder on 25th of February 1998 in Wroclaw of murdering of secret organization of "Ogla" structure, of church arson and anti-government campaign this nonsense concern also other people pure legal neo-pagan organization. By his lies two members of Fullmoon were arrested for 48 hours.

On 12th of March, during concert of Anepiclonus and Wj Oying Bialic, Anepiclonus was painfully beaten by provoking by these things, unknown people. We will show how big responsibility on the past accidents in Poland bears this individual. He decided to change status of his band Invernum, leave and betray underground and release second LP in commercial label. He also wanted to play the catch Vidas and Chacir Agency bands which he used to call "the police". Join Karcharoth (invernum commercial) Chacir (invernum) and catch him fight with Black Metal underground. He seemed to realize his plans during

summer of 1995. He did everything to cause misunderstandings between Rob Oshen and Capricornus and destroy Cavendish. He the most like his enemy hated band. Hiding deeply his hatred waited for proper time to attack. When he thought that his plans are close to succeed he stopped hiding his scumy plans. He seemed to spread news that he had been arrested and imprisoned by UOP loose security based on these days in connection with "The Temple of Fullmoon". He told that he had been badly and mentally tortured, that UOP knew everything what was going on in Polish Black Metal underground, but he had come to an agreement with UOP. They were to stop being interested on underground under the stipulation that Black Metal bands would stop spread ideology, unless all would be arrested.

In past Anepiclonus wanted to pose himself to stop their political fight due to his pose of police. Idea that he could go to prison became his obsession. In November and December 1995 everybody can see his old disease - schizophrenia. In childhood he suffered from nightmares and in age of 17 doctors found beginnings of schizophrenia and he lost himself in his conspiracy. He behaved abnormally and illogically he also took a lot of drugs and alcohol. His history had more and more illogical parts even to it had been illogical since the beginning. He said that somebody had wanted to kill him and had put dynamite into his P.O. Box. Later, in his imagination secret bureau of Russia (KGB) had involved. He even tried to escape to Sweden. The history of his insanity is full of other illogical occurrences and acts.

All in all, mostest corpse of second album of Inver-

num has been destroyed and anything that will never be done under this monies. All history of Anepiclonus should be a warning and information for you. Because today there are many false people destroying true face of Black Metal for money, fame, and they are prepared to lie, betray and cheat. Anepiclonus wanted only to walk behind his path - past and easy leading straight to become star of commercial false magazines. Stopped by his schizophrenia and lost directions of Black Metal, he called out the others may not. Death to the traitors!

(excerpt from "Our Newsletter No 8 Black Metal")





Considering the activities in which the TTF indulged and the radical configuration of the black metal movements of the Nineties, it is not surprising that the decision to issue such statements to the police turned Jurgielewicz into a sort of outcast, condemned by the whole scene - which violently lashed out against him, with official accusations of treason in the fanzine *Dark Blaze*. Moreover, to understand how a certain underground attitude was a necessary requirement and held in high esteem in order to be accepted within the black metal circle, it should be noted that among Karcharoth's various "crimes" there is that of wanting to collaborate with death metal bands and wanting to release *Infernum's* second album on a major label. The tragic climax of this downward spiral, apparently aggravated by the abuse of alcohol and drugs, took place on April 30, 2004 when Karcharoth committed suicide by jumping from the fifth floor of a building.

Just after his death, Darken and Capricornus decided to resurrect the name *Infernum* one last time to complete works on the second album, which were suddenly interrupted because of what we just recounted. Once they retrieved the original recordings, which they initially thought were lost, the two survivors went into the studio to complete the record with the help of the cryptic lyrics written for the occasion by Vitholf of the American NSBM band *Fanisk*. The album, maybe due to the misfortunes of the past years, puts aside the aggressiveness of the debut in order to rely on delayed rhythms and crepuscular soundscapes, with even more highlighted keyboards than before, which bring to mind some of the most atmospheric passages of early *Burzum*. In 2005 they released *Farewell*, a real goodbye to the scene, starting from the title itself, since after this record the curtain finally drops on the band. A farewell, however, which did not avoid dredging up the past and Karcharoth's disappearance, as shown by the final gloss in the booklet:

*«Finally we would like to thank Karcharoth for killing himself as he realized he was not the one who deserved the gift of life. If we were sorry it would be just because he died from his own hands, not ours...»<sup>23</sup>.*

Ironically, *Farewell* is also one of the last albums involving Capricornus who, shortly after, left the Polish underground scene for good.



Let's take a step back in order to better examine the history of this important character in the NSBM scene. Besides *Graveland* and *Infernum*, Capricornus was doubly tied not only to *The Temple of Fullmoon*, but also to two of the most radical realities of the international extreme music scene. Having completed the full-time collaboration with Rob Darken (in *Following the Voice of Blood* and *Thousand Swords* Capricornus appeared only as a session musician), Maciej Dąbrowski decided to focus on two new

artistic creatures that he had cultivated and developed in the meantime: on one hand was the project of the same name, and on the other was the seminal Thor's Hammer, two sides of the same coin, two channels to vent about different concepts, though totally devoted to a brutal ideological vision of black metal. These two projects were the result of uncompromising positions of rare harshness that, as we shall see, will express themselves perfectly, not only in terms of music, but also from illustrative and thematic points of view.

Concerning the work of the one-man band Capricornus, the debut was entrusted to the demo *Kein Blut Soll Verunreinigt Werden* (1995) which was reissued four years later as a 7" with the title *Stahlgewitter*, blatantly quoting one of the most beloved literary works in the Right-wing milieu, that is, *Storm of Steel*<sup>24</sup> by the German writer and philosopher Ernst Jünger, a leading exponent of the Conservative Revolution that inspired the philosophical thought of pre-Nazi Germany. A somewhat unusual choice, given that Jünger never succumbed to the lure of the NSDAP, which he actually criticized on several occasions (*«We built gold bridges for him, that he never wanted to cross»*, said Goebbels about him), while the tracks on the record emanate full-blown Nazi sympathies. With the exception of the last track, which takes up the theme of the Wild Hunt, the other subjects clearly show the direction of the project: no euphemisms or hesitations, but rather explicit references to the Nazi regime and the myth of the Reich and of a new Aryan empire.

The same year saw the release of a split album with well-known German agitators Aryan Blood, *Brennendes Jerusalem/Ortus Hominis Optimi Maximi*, to which Capricornus contributed three songs, one of which was based on a lyric by Hendrik Möbus. The ideology remains explicit and fully manifested, and was confirmed in no uncertain terms by Dąbrowski himself, when asked about the message contained in his lyrics:

*«Just like my music, they express my hatred towards every form of culture being in opposition to Aryan values. They are also a glorification of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich»*<sup>25</sup>.

A few years later came another split album, with the symbolic title *Polish-Hellenic Alliance Against ZOG!* (2003), shared with one of the heavyweights of the contemporary NS scene: the Greek combo Der Stürmer. The eponymous project debuted the following year with *Alone Against All*, out on Supernal Music, that turned out to be the ultimate sum of the sound and ideological direction of the Polish band. The sound is rough and scathing, made of solid black metal, but it still betrays the influence of some primordial proto-black metal, typical of the early bands. *Alone Against All* stands as a manifesto of the most explicit and radical NSBM, completely devoted to the National Socialist creed and fiercely drenched in anti-Jewish propaganda that finds its clear expression in the lyrics of *Bombing the Certain Land*:

*«From the north we arrive  
to attack from the sky  
to heal the world  
and destroy  
what deserves to die...*

*Bombing certain land...»<sup>26</sup>*

During this time, Capricornus was also involved with Thor's Hammer, which he formed in 1997, as a sort of philosophical workshop in which to gather the most diverse ideas on race, Aryanism and the myth of the blood, mixed and distributed in the form of music propaganda that is rarely matched in terms of brutality and intransigence. It could be argued that Thor's Hammer is his more lethal incarnation, if not from a musical standpoint, than certainly from an ideological one: the starting point is National Socialism, seen as the only rational political doctrine that is able to preserve the future of the Aryan race, combined with a radical contempt for monotheistic religions, Christianity in the first place, and all those forms of liberalism that rage in contemporary society which, with its *«moral code, hierarchy of values blocks the evolution of Aryan man»<sup>27</sup>.*

In the words of Capricornus himself, the music of Thor's Hammer is directed to those who are able to understand their own destiny and the true meaning of life<sup>28</sup>, and the need for propaganda with strong and indigestible tones that finds its best tool in black metal, especially when the genre is willfully created in its most anti-commercial and politically incorrect form. With the first full-length, *Fidelity Shall Triumph*, the characteristics of its sound are already clearly marked by classic black metal with vague thrash reminiscences, while the themes are perfectly in line with what we already mentioned. There is one song in particular, *Apothetai*, that is inspired by Spartan traditions and the primitive, terrible form of eugenics implemented with the selection of infants. The issue of eugenics will become one of the recurring themes in Capricornus' thought:

*«Eugenics have a future and should become the most important sphere of today's medicine as soon as possible. [...] To start this ambitious program we need a cultural revolution. Contemporary medicine has lost its sense. Instead of saving human life it extends life far beyond limits of common sense. Finally someone's best life and happiness means nothing if his progeny would be a danger for purity of the genetic pool»<sup>29</sup>.*

These ideas are closer to political fiction than current events, yet they are indicative of the type of talk advocated by the band.

The issues of natural selection, and by extension, those of racism along with an iron fist against any form of immigration and coexistence with other people, also recurs in the song *When the Weak Ones Ask for Help*, on *May the Hammer Smash the Cross*, an album that shows the band's philosophy even more and also manifests disgust towards



together to bomb Jerusalem, using some clichés of the most extreme fringe of esoteric Nazism.

The issue of racism will find its maximum expression, especially in the brutality of aesthetic choices, in the following album, entitled *The Fate Worse Than Death*: the artwork depicts a white woman kissing a black man and in the background - with a dramatic analogy between multiracial society and extinction of mankind - the explosion of a nuclear warhead. In the reissue by Lower Silesian Stronghold, dated 2001, the choice is even more explicit, with images inside the booklet depicting an Aryan girl in the sweet company of a black man and, in another photograph, two infants with monkey heads. The aesthetic impact, which calling politically incorrect is an understatement, is then taken up and expanded by the title track:

*«This is the fate worse than death,  
The crime against evolution.  
The race of purity and pride  
Becomes the lower form of life»<sup>30</sup>*

Racism is definitely one of the key components of Thor's Hammer who, without trying to hide behind the alleged provocative nature of black metal, approach the issue in a blatant and shameless manner. In fact, the words of Dąbrowski himself express concepts that appear to be directly lifted from Nazi theories on racial segregation:

*«My personal concept of racism is based on two fundaments. The first is deathly biologic reluctance towards racially alien ones. My pedagogics experiences convinced me that children's behaviours perfectly confirm the thesis of racial separatist instinct. The second is what I call "culturism". It could be compared to Adolf Hitler's conception of culture creators, bearers and*



## The Fate Worse



## Than Death

destroyers presented in *Mein Kampf*. The value of race is based on its cultural creativity, which should be protected from racially alien influences. Summing up, racism is an expression of cultural and biological self-defense and survival instinct»<sup>31</sup>.

In terms of music, the album features Raborym on guitar (later the leader of Dark Fury and Selbstmord) and Diathyrron on drums (former member of Fullmoon), who complete the line-up that will also record the next and last album *Three Weeds from the Same Root* (2004), a manifesto of hatred towards the monotheistic religions - as one can gather from the title and cover, in which a star of David, a cross and the crescent moon (symbol of Islam) are united by an intricate tangle of brambles and weeds. Once again, it is the title track that serves as an ideological compendium, lashing against those that are considered as harmful cults to the revival of a European pagan spirit without any hesitation, which, according to Capricornus, is the only compatible religion with the legacy of the Aryan people of the West:

*«Pigs of Jehovah,  
lambs of Christ,  
dogs of Allah  
your time is up!*

*The weeds that poison  
healthy plants  
Shall be destroyed  
in our lands...»<sup>32</sup>*

Among all these threats to the future of Europe, Christianity remains a primary enemy which must be addressed, according to Dąbrowski, because of its deep-rooted and ancient presence in the West:

*«Christianity is a natural enemy of humanism and everyone who declares himself as Christian should be punished as a criminal. If the National Socialist parties are forbidden in most European countries, I don't know why the same isn't with the Church? Is the Church more tolerant than NS organizations? Isn't Christianity totalitarian? Those "6 million" being Hitler's blame is nothing if we compare it with the crimes committed by the Christian plague. [...]I think the return to our ethnic religions, the ancestral, folkish direction is the only solution for European nations and our culture»<sup>33</sup>.*

With the release of this album, which came out shortly after *Alone Against All*, by his project of the same name, Capricornus' career as a major player on the stage of the Polish NSBM scene, as well as the international one, comes to an end. Although one album was already in the works (which should have been titled *At Any Cost!*), it was announced that Dąbrowski left the scene for good due to personal reasons which were never fully clarified. Over the years, through the Internet, there have been many rumours, and there was even a website<sup>34</sup> that joked about the "fall" of one of the key characters of the National Socialist black metal scene, and also claimed without euphemisms that Capricornus has turned into a drug addict who hangs out with colored people and has betrayed his political ideals. Although his drug addiction seems confirmed (though it is a problem that Dąbrowski later sorted out), to support its arguments the website uses blatantly fabricated material, such as retouched photos.

This event still carries an aura of impenetrability, which generated more or less credible legends as to Capricornus' fate, as it often happens in the black metal scene. Whatever the reasons that led him to abandon the scene and the personal problems that he had to face, he left us a musical legacy of incredible brutality that is rarely seen even within NSBM.



Veles, a name borrowed from a god of the Slavic pantheon, is another important ensemble for our examination. Led by Blasphemous, they sanctioned some particular traits of the "Polish sound" with just three albums, managing to earn undying respect in the scene. *The Triumph of Pagan Beliefs* demo had already sported an excellent array of harrowing vocals, enveloping riffs that offer an epic deceleration, and smoky, melodic breaks, all accompanied by an original use of keyboards, an element that was carefully controlled, in order to create atmospheres that were never tediously Gothic. The first full-length album *Night on the Bare Mountain* (1995), sees an improvement in terms of sound, thanks to some songs where the epic inspiration of pagan metal merges with rough black metal passages.



*Two pictures of Blasphemous of Veles*

The disc manages to certify the band's status, but they will be praised even more with the release of their next album, *Black Hateful Metal* (1997), one of the most celebrated works of the Eastern European metal underground. Despite the title, which leads one to think of a cold weapon assault, *Black Hateful Metal*

is a refined blend of different sounds in which keyboards, ambient noises, and guitars with an unusual folk tone, blend with apocalyptic black metal that is affected by the baggage of convictions balanced between Nazism and racist paganism making their way into the scene:

*«Where our world is - the land of full moon?  
Will that once had been ever come back?  
Where's your pride, White Man?  
Has the cross veiled your eyes?*

*For a thousand years strangers kept this land to dishonour  
To the people of strange blood you've sold your honour  
Your forefathers call you to avenge their blood  
The heritage of ancestors which you have to fulfill»*

The production is highly inadequate and the technical execution certainly not crystalline, but this album is considered by many to be a manifesto of the NSBM made in Poland nonetheless. Released on the label No Colours, the album suffered from inevitable distribution problems, exacerbated by some statements from the band, who made their adherence to National Socialism far more obvious than any of their lyrics and the aesthetics of their works which are still strongly related to a classic black metal imagery. Interviewed in issue 5 of *Into the Pentagram* about the untamed rise of ideologized black metal that finds Poland among the leaders, then-bassist Witalis said the following:

*«I adore all this racist trend, it's really positive aspect of this fashion. If only 1% of those posers will become deeply rooted in antisemitism and adoration of their own race, then the mission is done»<sup>36</sup>.*

After a long silence that lasted seven years, the band returned, in a decidedly different musical context, with *The Black Ravens Flew Again*. The album is an ideal continuation of what they interrupted, albeit updated to the year 2000, with significantly better production (by the standards of the genre) and songs with a square and essential structure. The ideological structure is, however, exactly the same - as proven by the acknowledgments at the end of the booklet signed with the "14 Words" - as well as the thematic references: see for example the track *The Song of Zarathustra*, whose lyrics are taken directly from *Thus Spake Zarathustra* by Friedrich Nietzsche.

More closely related to the direction of classic black metal, were Thunderbolt. Formed in 1993, the band debuted in 1996 with the demo *Beyond Christianity* (later reissued in the form of a split album with fellow compatriots Kataxu), followed by an EP titled *Black Clouds Over Dark Majesty*, with a strong melodic vein that sometimes emerges from fierce and pounding black metal. To counterbalance a sound so faithful to the Scandinavian tradition, Thunderbolt's early years were characterized by a very politically incorrect attitude, shown by the photos that accompanied the first tapes, where Celtic crosses and pentacles shared equal space. Although the typical black metal matrix was always present, at the beginning, the band deftly blended the anti Judeo-Christian imprint with the National Socialist creed.

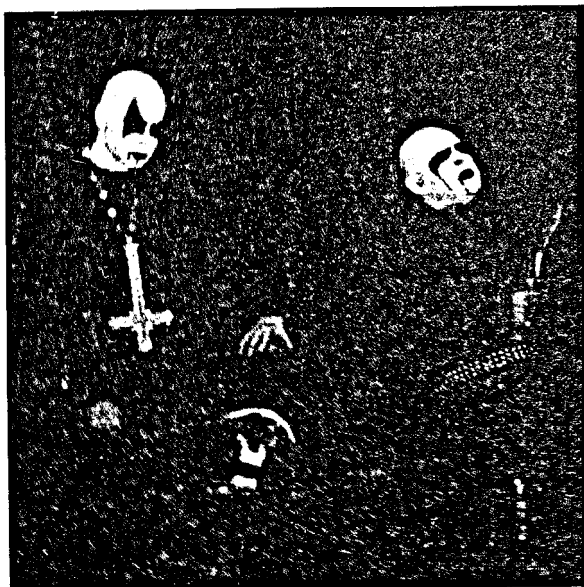


*«I think the reason is that we are the Aryan Elite and NS ideology is the kind of a natural choice and ideological progression for us - we stand above all and develop adequate direction. We understand that National Socialism is the only way to save Mother Europe from a jewish pestilence/religion that 'lord it' around... Jews and other betrayers want to rule this world and we must stop them!»<sup>37</sup>.*

The events that Thunderbolt had to face, however are only marginally related to the mere professing of political beliefs. Their name appeared in the local news in 1997, when some young people were accused



and tried for a number of crimes that put the spotlight on the connection between the black metal scene and the arson of places of worship. The members involved were Paimon (the band leader), Uldor and Galan Dracos (drums and bass respectively) and an additional fourth suspect, Cezar, who despite not playing in the band, was connected to the black metal scene. The investigation brought to light another fact that definitely aroused public concern: the cold-blooded murder of a homeless man by Cezar, with the complicity of Uldor. Arrested and taken before a judge, the two youngsters emulated what had already been seen in Norway and put on a show in court:



Thunderbolt

*"During their trial, people were shocked because in court Paimon, Uldor and Cezar were talking about Satanism and did not want to resign from it. Murder of the homeless was, according to Paimon, 'a natural selection'".*

At the end of the trial, Cezar, who was considered the main instigator at the scene of the murder, was sentenced to 25 years in prison; Uldor had a significantly milder punishment (4 years), while Paimon, only charged with attempted arson, was released because he was a minor at the time. It is unclear whether Galan Dracos was later jailed, but in an interview Paimon ended the matter regarding his involvement in the band saying: *"Galan Dracos is suspected of some crimes too and shows his weakness in the eye of the law"*, perhaps suggesting that he had turned into an informer. Needless to say, these events marked a setback in the band's activity, and also forced them to revise the entire line-up - Uldor did, in fact, leave the black metal scene for good immediately after his release. The debut album, *The Sons of the Darkness*, came out in 2002 and, despite clear satanic content, was released by the American label Resistance Records, thus helping to consolidate Thunderbolt's name (which they had already done with a song in the first volume of the compilation-manifesto, *The Night and the Fog*) in the NSBM scene.

Later, the band would distance themselves from their early associations, stating that their bond with the rising National Socialist black metal scene was solely

attributable to the absence of other organized groups in the underground. But the stigma of the swastika is difficult to remove, despite the denials.

*«Thunderbolt was a devilish band since the beginning. Our ideology was and will be Luciferian. That's the path we follow. So-called "NSBM" scene and bands such like Graveland, Fullmoon, Infernum, Veles were the only scene in my area at that time (in 1993 when we joined black metal movement) and we were close to this scene and those people till 1998/1999. Anyway we didn't ever feel any connections with policy itself because I'm an individualist and I walk my own way in life and I don't need any mundane policy, religion or whatever to feel better in this world of shit. We just wanted to underline and state that we've NOTHING in common with "NSBM" as some assholes still want to attribute us to it. I hate at all humans and I don't care about any people and I don't care if they're white, black or whatever»<sup>40</sup>.*

However, after the debut, the band continued its career with a series of canonical black metal albums released between 2001 and 2007, all of them with a strong satanic mark and devoid of any ideological foundation, until they finally split up.

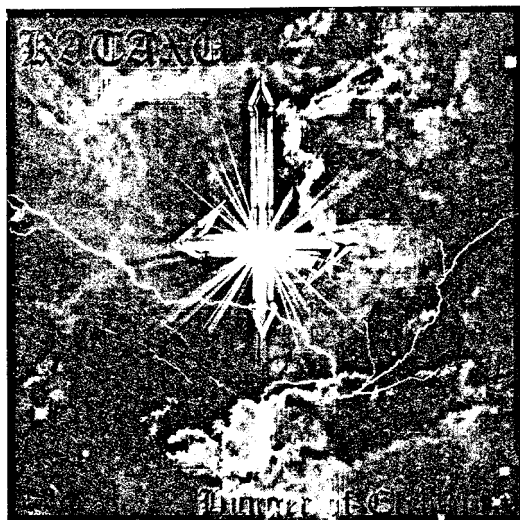


It was *Beyond Christianity/North* released in 1997, a split album with Thunderbolt, that marked Kataxu's first official release. The band are the leading exponents of that faction dedicated to symphonic black metal that sees Emperor as their main source of inspiration. The first full-length, *Roots Thunder* (2000), was already a harbinger of that particular combination of epic sounds and high-impact orchestrations that was to be massively employed in *Hunger of Elements* (released in 2005 via Supernal Music). In spite of a graphic and lyrical structure devoid of excess, and hard as it is to trace a definite



Inner graphics of the tape *Roots Thunder* (2000) by Kataxu


inclination of thought in songs like *In Arms of the Astral World* or *Nightsky*, which are very distant from typical NSBM, it is the band themselves that emphasize their ideological adherence in the booklet, clearly writing: «*Kataxu as the main pillar of the Aryan Art, is intended only for warriors creating the superman's empire*». These statements are further confirmed by their professed support of the Pagan Front, and a series of split albums with bands that are particularly active in the militant underground (the aforementioned Thunderbolt, as well



as Ohtar, Gontyna Kry and Saltus, with which the band shares an album titled *Hail Pagan Europe*, with a cover that bears a famous image of Nazi propaganda).

Piąty - born Piotr Piątek, leader and practical factotum of the band - also lends his services to another group that chose to convey National Socialist belief through symphonic black metal: Sunwheel. Formed in the late Nineties with the cumbersome and explicit moniker Swastyka, under which they only released one demo titled *Prophecies of Aryan Moon*, the band changed their name to Sunwheel and then debuted with a split album with the American NSBM band Grom. Musically, their technical skills are enviable: were it not for their precise ideological choice (making them commercially and socially suicidal), the band would enjoy a much higher visibility. The evidence is in the impressive drum work that sustains the EP *Monuments of the Elder Faith* (2004), the work of Dariusz Brzozowski (aka Daray), who is already in Vader and currently appears with Dimmu Borgir for their live shows - news that caused some commotion on various online forums dedicated to black metal.

Piątek also plays with one of the main bands of the the Polish National Socialist black metal scene, Gontyna Kry ("Temple of Blood" in Slavic), active since 1993. The band ended up under the spotlight for some albums that received a lot of feedback in the NSBM scene, like *Welowie* (a demo later reissued in CD format) and the debut *Krew naszych Ojców*, both fine examples of excellent black metal craftsmanship. The aesthetic is still traditionally black metal, with corpse paint and studs, but the National Socialist connotations are firmly present and not particularly hard to find: one look at the iconography adorning the booklets is enough, or at the the song titles, such as *For the Land For the Blood* or *We Come You Will Spew with Blood You Jewish Bastard*, which do not require any comments. Not to mention statements made by members of the band that are always aligned with a declared faith in National Socialist black metal:



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 THUNDERBOLT), brings the devastating powerful and majestic sounds  
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 soon awake!

Band contact only through e-mail: [swastyka@hotmail.com](mailto:swastyka@hotmail.com)  
 web-site at: [www.paganfront.org/swastyka](http://www.paganfront.org/swastyka)

*Swastyka's advertising flyer printed in the fanzine Hatemonger*

*«Support all that is Aryan, the values most important for us. Aim at development and creativity. What is more, the unity, which shall exist among us, shall also be ever greater. In this situation only the unity will allow us to achieve a monumental victory, a victory of the new millennium [...] Stay faithful to the ideas of NSBM Glory to our Ancestors! Glory to us!»<sup>41</sup>.*

Recently however, after a hiatus that lasted a few years, the band has chosen to review its stance, remaining faithful to the pagan ideal but abandoning any political connotation.



Leaving behind a precise ideological connotation is no longer news: with the disintegration of the TTF and the disappearance of some key characters who had helped to animate the underground scene, the Polish National Socialist scene has progressively lost consistency. We have witnessed a process of differentiation that has affected various surviving bands who left a season of excesses behind them. Some revised stances that were too uncomfortable, or they simply updated their conceptual and musical background, embracing other sounds and other issues.

While some bands relocated themselves within the racist pagan metal scene, like Graveland or Iuvenes, other bands - such as the aforementioned Gontyna Kry - have distanced themselves from a cumbersome past. Others have further exacerbated their political connotation, even abandoning black metal's characteristic aesthetics devoting



themselves to release music more directed towards those radical fringes deriving from the skinhead scene, that had gradually accepted and welcomed the rise of NSBM.

Dark Fury are definitely the leading name among bands that have followed this path. Founded in 1997 by Raborym (previously active with Thor's Hammer and Ohtar) and Diathyrron (ex-Fullmoon), they managed to secure a sizeable following and a relevant spot in the contemporary NSBM scene, although they appeared on the scene after everything was said and done - thanks to intense activity

that saw the production of a sequence of split albums and seven full-lengths. Devotion to the Nazi ideal is obvious throughout their discography, from the explicit concepts expressed with their albums to their affiliation to the Pagan Front (with participation on the third volume of *The Night and the Fog*). The band does not hide its own ideas, expressing them clearly and going as far as touching paradoxical forms of revisionism regarding the history of their own country

*«As for Hitler and the "few jews" he killed... Before WWII most of the merchant, factories, plants here were owned by jews. The problem was so big that jews had a slogan "our houses, your*



*February 2012, Dark Fury perform live in Italy*

streets"... They were a plague of Poland. I'm not telling you that Hitler is our hero, but who knows how Poland would look if it was not for WWII, concentration camps and "showers"»<sup>42</sup>.

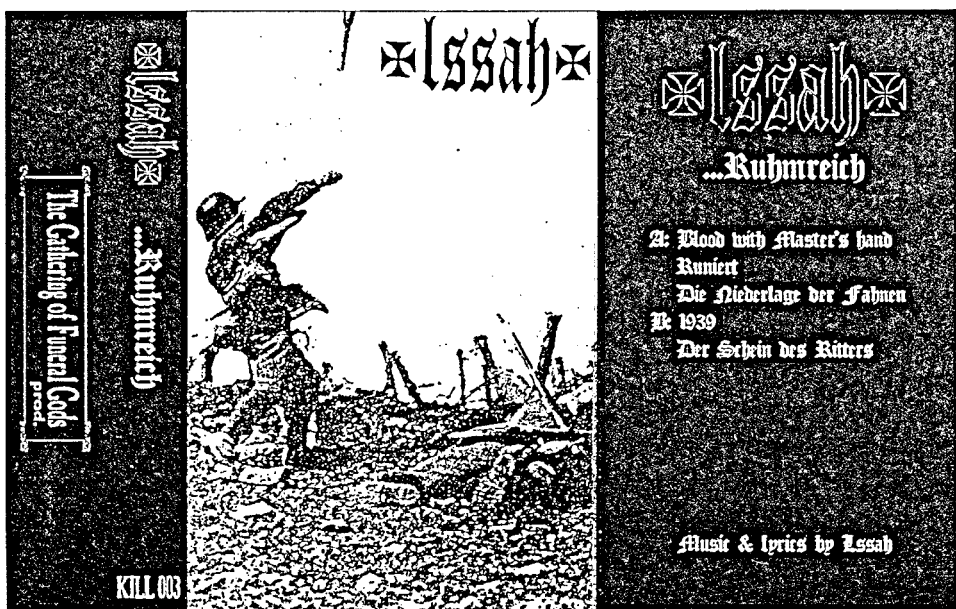
The musical legacy at the base of the band is obviously a more modern variation of the precepts consolidated during the years of the infamous The Temple of Fullmoon. An experience that, although concluded, has left a tangible mark on the underground:

*«TTF is a song of the past. I've seen a few men trying to reactivate the old organization, but it has nothing to do with real terror spreaded by TTF»*<sup>43</sup>.

Ohtar are also in the same ideological direction, authors of several integralist split albums with bands like Antisemitex (a name that needs no further comment), Dark Fury and Selbstmord, a project that moves within similar soundscapes, mixing cold weapon assaults lashed by occasional melodic textures. Dark Fury, Ohtar and Selbstmord are also highly incestuous projects as they revolve around the same core of musicians. This is the reason why there has been a certain similarity of sound, as well as ideology, over the years.

It would be a big mistake to think that NSBM has remained confined within the boundaries of the TTF and its followers in Poland. Although that embryonic organization was certainly the main architect of the process of radicalization that led to a new level of thematic and musical intransigence, the black metal movement has evolved over the years, and it has produced several independent organizations that move outside of a structured underground. It should also be remembered that the TTF was inspired by Norwegian black metal, internalizing its examples and fusing them with an ideological background that was far from strictly political at first and was instead desperately searching for new frontiers of brutality. Over time, because of the decline of those pseudo esoteric organizations that we mentioned, a general lack of interest in the occult paved the way for the flourishing of various nationalist, pagan, racist and in some cases explicitly National Socialist ideas which have, in some ways, taken the place of that peculiar Satanism that initiated everything. Today's scene is the result of this partitioning process, with projects that do not recognize themselves as a unit in a system of shared values, but are all generally relocated within the extreme Right because of aesthetics, ideas and theoretical knowledge.

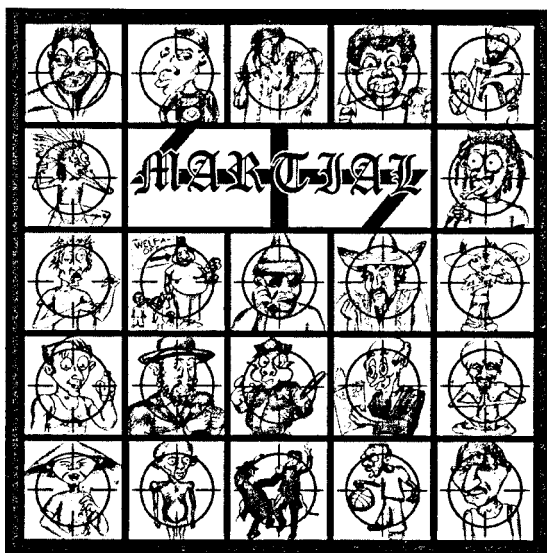
In this sense, a number of small projects have spontaneously aligned themselves with what was perceived as the new fringe of extreme black metal since the mid-Nineties, almost as if it were a natural progression of the genre. Among these there are Uzjal, who after only one demo changed their name to LSSAH - an acronym of Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler<sup>44</sup> - marking their adherence to the National Socialist ideology. However, *Ruhmreich*, their first tape with the new moniker, was their last release and ended up being one of many manifestations of deplorable ideological excesses that inflamed the European underground at the end of the last century.



Even more explicit and totally devoted to the ideology, are the releases of bands such as the already mentioned Antisemitex, Severe Storm and Martial; projects that belong to two figures active in the scene since the late Nineties: Kolan and Eiserne Faust. Antisemitex represent a variation on the NSBM theme, with their radical death metal (or skinhead war metal, as they have dubbed it themselves) coupled with clear RAC references for an uncompromising mix that is rather atypical as well. Stripped of any epic inspiration or implied esoteric meaning, the remainder is a sonic assault with obvious racist and anti-Semitic connotations. This is blatantly revealed on the cover of the first demo which shows the sign "Arbeit Macht Frei" at the entrance of the Auschwitz concentration camp. Their only full-length, *No Hope, No Future... Just WAR!*, saw the light in 2005 and altered their thematic approach, proven by songs such as *The Aryans Defenders*, *In the Steel Storms* and *They Are Coming*. Kolan is also the mind behind the one-man band Severe Storm, whose sound is definitely more archetypal, oriented towards extremist and pounding black metal. The first demo, titled *Satanic Combat*, seems to be made for the joy of the NSBM hordes, as well as the follow-up, *Ragnarok*, which anticipates their debut on Darker Than Black entitled *Follow the Paths of Darkness...* (2010).

This brings us to the absolutely radical and foul work of Martial. Putting aside any Nazi-satanic harmony or esoteric heritage, they plunge headlong into vicious racist and anti-Semitic propaganda. The triptych of demos *Death to the Inferior Races* (later reissued on *Satanic Skinhead Propaganda*), *Trupia czaszka* and *Rehearsal 1997*, all released in 1997, is marked by coarse black metal of little note, that would go completely unnoticed were it not for the ferocious and brutal contents. Those demos were followed by

a long hiatus, interrupted in 2007 with participation on the compilation *The Night and the Fog Part III - Underground Heathen Hammer*, the third volume in the series sponsored by the Pagan Front. A few years later, the band officially re-opened the hostilities releasing *Execution*, an EP that was released on vinyl by the American label Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, one of the most controversial record companies out there as well as one of the few capable of supporting the aesthetical violence and ideology of the Polish band. The album,



starting with a cover that would be euphemistic to define as outrageous, turns out to be a mess of rough black metal splinters that differ slightly from the demos, with no memorable passages and aimed at an audience that, in the best case scenario, feeds on excess even at the expense of the music.



To this day, Poland remains one of the countries with the highest presence of NSBM bands and their ilk, given the impossibility to draw a clear line between overtly politicized bands and all the underground groups devoted to hybrid forms of pagan metal (a particularly popular genre in Eastern Europe) with a strong racial imprint. As we have seen in this chapter, the current scene owes its existence to the pioneering experiments implemented by The Temple of Fullmoon, which has lived on in the collective imagination, feeding a myth that probably exceeds reality, but is inseparably associated with the birth of National Socialist black metal. In order to understand to which extent the TTF adventure has remained etched in the memory of some bands, it is sufficient to note that this sound is still popular in the Polish underground, and there are also actual tributes to that small musical revolution. An apparent one came from Werewolf (a side project of the well-known combo Iuvenes, which followed the footsteps of Graveland and Veles), whose debut is explicitly titled *The Temple of Fullmoon* (2005). In the booklet, there is writing superimposed on a Celtic cross which says: «*Polish Aryan Black Metal*».

The impact of The Temple of Fullmoon was enough to earn it respect beyond national borders: apart from the established Polish-German axis, signs of esteem also came from the other cradle of NSBM, namely France, where bands like Kristallnacht claimed to be inspired by activities in Poland. Another example, which took the form of a real tribute,



was the website set up by Akhenaten, of the American group Judas Iscariot, as a homage to the bands involved in the TTF, defined as «*the most extreme stronghold for black metal today*», whose musicians are «*icons for a nationalistic cultural revolution*»<sup>45</sup>.

The unexpected explosion of one of the most radical movements to ever appear on the continent, which for its ferocity (but also for its musical quality on occasion) was almost on a par with the Norwegian Inner Circle, was probably the ultimate expression of what can be defined as NSBM, in this case using a wider meaning of the term. As further evidence of this, it is sufficient to note that on the first *The Night and the Fog* compilation, which baptized the genre, ten of the sixteen bands listed were Polish: Thor's Hammer, Wineta, Veles, Thunderbolt, Fullmoon, War88, Graveland, Gontyna Kry, Galgenberg and Kraina Bez Wiatru. What happened is the result of a unique situation that was able to interpret the rising black metal movement, not only as a cradle for a type of Satanism that was tinged with a superhuman attitude and new theories inherited from a series of esoteric movements that were popular back then (Sinister Black Order and Order of Fenrir in the first place), but also as an instrument of disruption towards society and its own musical traditions. In those years, alliances were secured, the prime example being the one with the skinhead scene. This alliance put factions in contact that were previously sworn enemies, breaking an atmosphere of contemptuous superiority and elitism that seemed part of black metal's DNA (we shall see how in France, despite a common ideological denominator, the NSBM bands will always haughtily detach themselves from the white power milieu) and actually paved the way for a recruitment phenomenon that would explode in the following years and find its highest expression in the Eastern European territories.

## Notes:

1 - Graveland, from *Resistance* n.27, spring 2007.

2 - Graveland, from *Dark Moon* n.10, March 2010.

3 - Xantotol, from *7 Gates Mega-Sin* n.5, 2003.

4 - Capricornus would later leave the order, once he realized that what claimed to be a pan-European organization with several circles around the Old Continent and the United States was in fact little more than an initiation club held together by a dense correspondence between its members.

5 - M. Piskorski, *Sinistrum Polska*, from *The Nexus* n.2, November 1995.

6 - Ibid.

7 - Graveland, from *Dark Moon* n.10, March 2010.

8 - From Xantotol's biography published on Kampf Records website([www.kampf.ws](http://www.kampf.ws)).

9 - Graveland, from *Dark Moon* n.10, March 2010.

10 - As reported by Rob Darken in an interview with the fanzine Scapegoat (n.12, 1999) between 1994 and 1997, 397 places of worship were damaged or burned, at least 90 with proven intent. Many of these damages, however, went relatively unnoticed as part of an internal conflict between the Church and the remnants of the Communist Party, which over the years had constantly sought to undermine its power, resorting to various means, not all entirely legitimate. According to the statements, it was only in 1997 that there was the first official case of fire damage to a place of worship that involved young members of the black metal movement.

11 - Leinad died in 2006 in a DUI accident.

12 - Graveland, from Dark Moon n.10, March 2010.

13 - Ibid.

14 - Excerpt from the the song by Graveland *The Night of Fullmoon*.

15 - Graveland, from Dark Moon n.10, March 2010.

16 - Graveland, from Resistance Magazine n.7, spring 2007.

17 - *Polish Musical Resistance*, from Blood & Honour n.44, 2011.

18 - Graveland, from Heathen Hammer, spring 2008.

19 - «*We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children*».

20 - From the *Creed of Iron* booklet, No Colours Records, 2000.

21 - Graveland, from Thrashing Rage, 2005.

22 - The information about Karcharoth's "betrayal" was first published in the newsletter War, run by Isengard Productions behind which there were Rob Darken and, until the time of his departure, Karcharoth himself. It was later reprinted on the fanzine Dark Blaze.

23 - Previously, on the reissue of the first ...*Taur-Nu-Fuin...* by Supernal Music, there was a not so respectful «*Karcharoth RIP (Rest in Fucking Pain)*» in the booklet.

24 - The book is a rehash of notes and excerpts from diaries that the author wrote during his experience on the Western Front during the First World War, and became particularly famous for the raw representation of the horrors of war and - a recurring theme in Jünger's philosophy - for the first reflections on technologies, towards which the author would always maintain a critical opinion.

25 - Capricornus, from W.N.B.D. n.14.

26 - Excerpt from the song by Capricornus *Bombing the Certain Land*.

27 - Thor's Hammer, from The Muspellzheimr Journal n.1, 1999.

28 - Ibid.

29 - Ibid.

30 - Excerpt from the song by Thor's Hammer *The Fate Worse Than Death*.

## SINISTRUM POLSKA

- 31 - Thor's Hammer, from *The Muspellzheimr Journal* n.1, 1999.
- 32 - Excerpt from the song by Thor's Hammer *Three Weeds from the Same Root*.
- 33 - Capricornus/Thor's Hammer, from *Mourning the Ancient* ([www.mourningtheancient.com](http://www.mourningtheancient.com)).
- 34 - The website ([www.capricornus.y0.pl](http://www.capricornus.y0.pl)), which was apparently created by another active character in the Polish black metal underground.
- 35 - Excerpt from the song by Veles *Millennium of Disgrace*.
- 36 - Veles, from *Into the Pentagram* n.5, 1997.
- 37 - Thunderbolt, from *Dark Blaze-Into the Pentagram*, November 2001.
- 38 - Lord Wind, from *Scapegoat* n.12, 1999.
- 39 - Thunderbolt, from *Mourning the Ancient* ([www.mourningtheancient.com](http://www.mourningtheancient.com)).
- 40 - Thunderbolt, from *Frostkamp* (<http://frostkamp.wordpress.com/>), August 2008.
- 41 - Gontyna Kry, from *Mourning the Ancient* ([www.mourningtheancient.com](http://www.mourningtheancient.com)).
- 42 - Dark Fury, from *Ghost Kommand* n.4, summer 2009.
- 43 - Dark Fury, from *Breidablik* (<http://breidablik-zine.narod.ru>), 2007.
- 44 - An armed unit created as the Führer's bodyguards, then turned into an actual military division of the Waffen-SS.
- 45 - Akhenaten, from the website *Tribute to Polish Black Metal*, no longer active.

# The Behemoth Affair

«GREAT RENAISSANCES EMERGE FROM WITHIN GREAT BETRAYALS»<sup>1</sup>

[VASILIJ ROZANOV]

**D**etaching themselves completely from the sound of early black metal, Behemoth have long since gone beyond the confines of the underground to become one of the leading bands in the worldwide metal scene, contributing substantially to the re-definition and affirmation of Polish extreme metal even beyond their country's boundaries. However, if nowadays their career falls in the mainstream category, or at least in that part of the underground that enjoys feedback and recognition on a large scale, one can not avoid taking a look at what happened in the early Nineties when, still unac-

knowledgeled, they emerged from that bubbling magma of sounds and experiences that - as we have seen - would later give birth to one of the great bastions of NSBM worldwide.

Forerunners of what the band itself called Evil Pagan Black Metal, topped off with the whole corollary of high-sounding proclamations about the need to clean up the scene from those bands that were not really devoted to what was perceived as a cult and not a simple music genre, Behemoth took their first steps alongside some of the most radical projects around at the time. In the early days of their career, those of the chaotic *Endless Damnation* and the subtly atmospheric - albeit rough - *The Return of the Northern Moon*, Nergal and co. seemed to fit perfectly into that black enclave that was gaining strength in Poland. We must not forget that Nergal was one of the founders of The Temple of Infernal Fire, an early form of underground aggregation created along the



Nergal, ...From The Pagan Vastlands era



lines of the Inner Circle - from which they took not only the image and the sound, but also the extreme attitude.

With the historic ...*From the Pagan Vastlands* Behemoth finally earned a prominent role in the chaos of bands that were proliferating in an uncontrolled manner. Strengthened by decent production, which made the songs soar, the record represents one of the compositional peaks of primitive black metal from the Eastern bloc, built on solid riffs and simple melodies that clearly echoed the Norwegian masters, though betrayed by some atmospheric traits that would later become characteristic of the bands of the Temple of Infernal Fire. The demo was honored with the collaboration of Rob Darken, who in those years was very

active in the underground, with various collaborations outside of Graveland. This partnership, and the mutual support that had marked both bands' career, was bound to end, because shortly thereafter, a sort of anathema would fall on the name Behemoth, giving rise to a smear campaign like no other.

Despite the release of two more gems like *Sventevith (Storming Near the Baltic)* and *Grom* - which was in fact, the last album before the death metal turn that made them famous - the band enjoyed both a rise in the music market and a fall in their status within the Polish underground. The reasons are diverse and not completely clear, however, it is well known and documented how little it took to trigger a crusade of excessive virulence. The first sign of a disagreement came when The Temple of Infernal Fire was renamed The Temple of Fullmoon, with the introduction of some extreme Right ideologies and actions. It was not long before Behemoth distanced themselves from this new



*The cover of Sventevith (Storming Near The Baltic) featuring the piece The Temple of Swarog by Stanislaw Jakubowski*

## Anti-behemoth Front



Here is supposed  
representative of polish  
Black Meral scene - ROTTEN  
and ASORTIVE Behemoth!

Anti-Behemoth propaganda

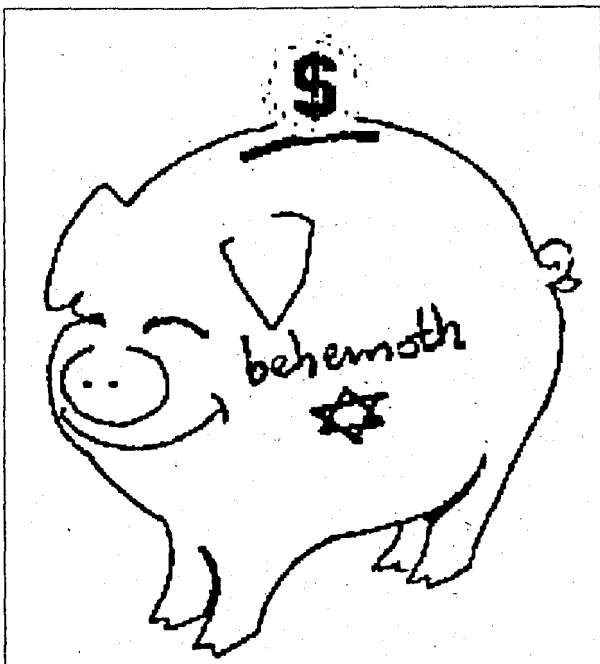
incarnation of the "temple", and according to Darken's statements: *«Not because of the Right-wing ideologies but because of more and more dangerous activities connected with a holy war against Christianity»*<sup>2</sup>.

As evidence of the fact that a certain grudge was growing towards the band, and their leader in particular, it is interesting to quote an anecdote involving Samoth and Leinad of the cult band Mysteries, a real institution at the time:

*«Once they talked to Nergal of Behemoth about the BM scene etc. And very quickly they decided that Nergal was not a right person for TTF. And they put Behemoth out of underground BM scene and then other people turned their backs on Nergals»*<sup>3</sup>.

In another interview that appeared in the third issue of the Swiss fanzine Skogen, Rob Darken gave further details on the *casus belli* that began this cold war among some of the most relevant bands of the Polish underground. Darken claimed that part of this campaign was orchestrated by the leader of Infernum, Anextiomarus, and that

the path taken by Behemoth towards more commercial sounds, along with their relationships with «*fucking death metal stars such as Christ Agony and Vader*»<sup>4</sup> and the denigration of some ideas that were at the basis of understanding black metal for the TTF, did nothing but dig an irreparable rut between Nergal's band and the rest of the scene. Considering the degree of collaboration and exchange of information that had been established between the various radical groups, in particular on the Polish-German axis, it was not long before the hate campaign towards Behemoth found followers even beyond the Polish border.



*An anti-Behemoth propaganda picture taken from the Polish fanzine Antychryst*

However, the band's misfortunes were far from over. In the same interview, Darken told how, tracing a modus operandi already seen in Scandinavia, Aro (Perunwit's singer and member of the TTF) showed up at Nergal's house armed and openly threatening him<sup>5</sup>. Interviewed in the same issue of the fanzine - creating a curious Q&A session within the space of a few pages - Nergal dismissed the incident, speaking of an unnecessary provocation without consequences, asserting that his subsequent change of residence was attributable to disagreements with his parents, as well as his desire to not find himself inundated with hate mail and phone calls in the middle of the night<sup>6</sup>.

Part of this feud could have also derived from an ideological clash: Behemoth were proud of their Slavic identity while in the TTF, especially in the early years of its existence, which coincided with the exacerbation of some neo-Nazi ideas introduced by Capricornus. Namely that there was a completely opposite pro-Germanic vision, which traced back to the legacy of the Teutonic peoples who occupied the territory centuries earlier.

Behemoth's consequent artistic shift, which turned them into a black/death metal hybrid, was perceived as a search for commercial success by detractors and became yet another reason for argument between the two factions. The attacks followed one another and, in line with a proven practice, flyers and leaflets began to circulate. Then came actual articles devoted to the question of the "betrayal of the black flame" operated by



*The cover of the first issue of the NSBM fanzine Antychryst*



Behemoth, filled with accusations and various assumptions. Case in point is a piece that appeared in the first issue of the NSBM fanzine *Antychryst*, titled *Behemoth - idols of the young drug addicts*, in which the band is not spared insults. Nergal and co. found themselves completely cut off from that whole musical context in which they had taken their first steps, as Capricornus' precise judgment also proves:

*«Personally, I don't give a shit for Behemoth, but I understand the people who simply hate this band. Behemoth presents the same kind of behaviour you know from bands such as Dimmu Borgir or Cradle of Filth. [...] The problem of Nergal lies in his too high selfestimation. To people like me it makes him a funny guy, but others can get angry. Of course, there are also ideological reasons. Behemoth's constant changes of views, from Viking influences, by Slavonic Pride statements, to Satanic Death Metal - it causes that this band can not deserve creditability...»<sup>7</sup>.*

Only in recent years, with the gradual disappearance of many of the bands that took part in this controversy, and with the dissolution of The Temple of Fullmoon, the issue has slowly come to its natural conclusion (despite periodically resurfacing during interviews)<sup>8</sup>. Now Graveland and Behemoth are among the few survivors of that period, and the distance between the two bands - not only ideological, but also aesthetical and musical - has made the issue anachronistic, and the legacy of a past now completely buried, ultimately delivering it to the history of Polish black metal.



## Notes:

1 - Vasilij Rozanov (1856 - 1919).

2 - Graveland, from Dark Moon n.10, March 2010.

3 - Ibid.

4 - Graveland, from Skogen 'zine n.3, 1996.

On *Sventevith (Storming Near the Baltic)* there is the guest appearance of Cezary Augustynowicz from Christ Agony.

5 - According to the interviewer, one of the reasons for this reckless act was the choice of using a painting by Stanisław Jakubowski for the cover of *Sventevith*, something that Aro considered an insult, as he did not deem Behemoth worthy of using it. This is not, however, either confirmed nor denied by Nergal. There are also several versions regarding the reconstruction of the facts, in which Aro is alternately armed with a gun, a knife or disarmed. Nor is it clear whether there was finally a dispute of some kind, and who eventually won. However, it seems that after this episode the leader of Behemoth changed his address.

6 - Behemoth, from Skogen 'zine n.3, 1996.

7 - Capricornus, from *Mirgilus Sicularum* ([www.mirgilus.com](http://www.mirgilus.com)), 2004.

8 - Again in 2005, in an interview which appeared on the website SMN NEWS ([www.smnnews.com](http://www.smnnews.com)), Nergal had clearly had enough of the whole issue but was questioned about some of Rob Darken's statements regarding Behemoth's lack of acceptance of the true principles of black metal, and their status of commercial band in league with the majors.



...harmful to minors it shall be put on the index in  
...in a simplified act (§ 15a GJS) or, in ex...tionally  
...the list at all (§ 6 GJS) Media with p...ography

# Hellenic Werwolf Kommando

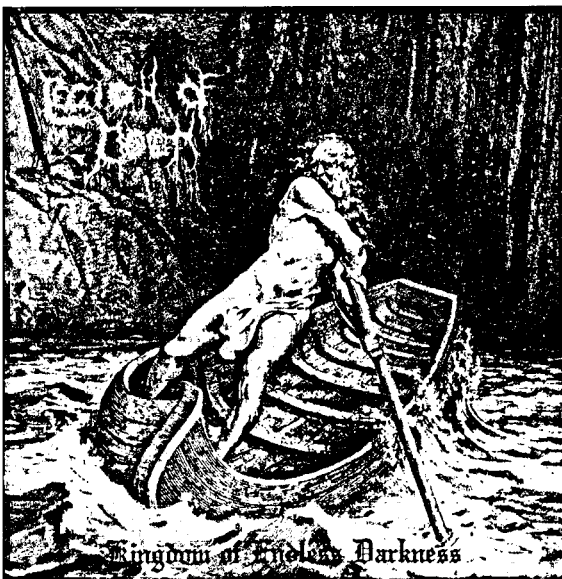
## Der Stürmer, Wolsnacht and NSBM from the Mediterranean

«THE ROOTS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM CAN BE FOUND IN ANCIENT HELLAS BOTH IDEOLOGICALLY AND AESTHETICALLY. THE SWASTIKA IS THE IMMORTAL SYMBOL THAT REPRESENTS THE ARYAN SOLAR CIVILIZATION AND THE HELLENIC IDEAL EXPRESSES THIS CIVILIZATION IN ALL ITS GREATNESS»<sup>1</sup>

[DER STÜRMER]

**G**reece is a country with many intriguing facets and a rich history, but lurking behind its reassuring tourist appeal hides a wealthy undergrowth of bands dedicated to black metal, and the number of NSBM followers among them is truly remarkable. Only Poland can be considered a worthy rival from this point of view, geographically able to accommodate a set of bands and projects that exceeds (in terms of quantity and sometimes quality) the Hellenic nation.

To begin, a special mention should be immediately addressed to Legion of Doom, a band that some exponents of the NSBM scene consider the true forerunners of the whole movement: reference the aesthetic choice of *Kingdom of Endless Darkness*, the 1994 debut album, whose first edition had a swastika printed in the CD booklet. The album was promptly censored and the artwork significantly changed, an action that angered the band a lot, as they had done nothing to hide their fierce contempt for the Jewish people, since as early as the second half of the



Nineties. Not surprisingly, *Kingdom of Endless Darkness*, dedicated a poisonous invective to the very same people on the opening track, titled *Holocaust of David's Race*.

A useful starting point for trying to understand NSBM in the Greek territory is undoubtedly the compilation-manifesto released in 2004 thanks to the involvement

of the youth fringe of the Golden Dawn, an ultranationalist movement of Nazi inspiration - not to be confused with the famous English hermetic order founded by Crowley - headed by former soldier Nikolaos G. Michaloliakos; an organization guided by the rule of Sparta and molded on deep currents of anti-Christian paganism and ideas resembling a mystic interpretation of Hitler's legacy. *Hellenic Vanguard - NSBM Weltanschauung*, the name of the sampler, features fourteen tracks by bands such as Der Stürmer, Ravenbanner, The Shadow Order, Wodulf, Darkthule, Gauntlet's Sword,



Pyrron, vocalist of the Greek NSBM combo The Shadow Order

Bannerwar, Wolfnacht and others. While some are side-projects of already established bands and others are group collaborations, the final results are extremely heterogeneous, although falling in the same vein. Despite the ups and downs, a fanatical devotion to the cause is definitely not lacking; take for example, some excerpts of interviews given by some of the bands involved, such as The Shadow Order, thus described by their singer, Pyrron:

*«The Shadow Order is a black metal horde dedicated to NS ideals. [...] Our music is intolerant black metal and we like to use well-thought out lyrics that focus on the Aryan spirit. Black metal had become more popular and commercial. I think that this was another reason for the birth of National Socialist black metal. NSBM is like a breath of life into the rotten body of the BM scene. Most of the bands (there are exceptions, of course) in heathen NSBM try to give this music its original meaning»<sup>2</sup>.*

As we shall see, Der Stürmer, is the undisputed jewel in the crown of the Hellenic scene, but there is another project that seems able to compete with them: Wolfnacht, a one-man band from the island of Corfu founded by Athalwolf in 1998. From the very

beginning, Wolfnacht demonstrated an ideological intransigence and anti-Semitic ferocity much greater than the local average. The first five demos (*Thor's Hammer*, *Kirchenbrand*, *Blut und Ehre*, *Morgendämmerung der Heiden* and *Für den Sieg*), released in tight sequence between 1998 and 2001, are real examples of Nazi propaganda without compromise; the demos are followed by six albums, among which there is the unforgiving *Töten Für W.O.T.A.N.* (2003).

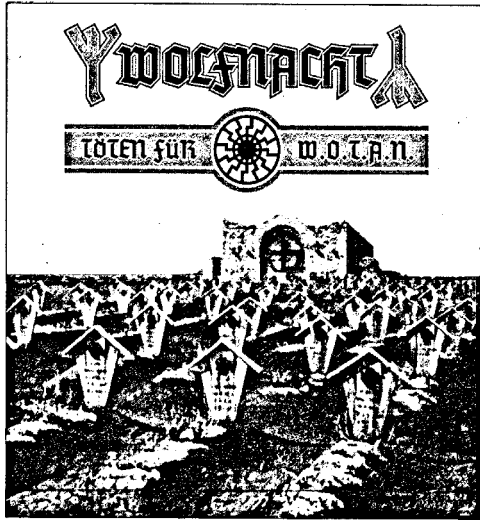
Few works possess the same overwhelmingly evocative cloak of this record: the ten acts that make up the soundtrack are soaked to the bone with deadly and violent pan-Germanism. Not surprisingly, the dominant language for the songs is German, a distinctive trait (and to some extent unique in the Greek NSBM community), which is explicitly claimed by Athalwolf. The songs are the result of a wild mixture of black metal and RAC, reworking slogans of Hitler's regime or directly resuming old military marches and transforming them into cruel, electrically amplified hymns. The choice of samplings for the intro and outro of the CD, as well as between the individual songs, has the heavy crackle typical of vinyl, and gives the listener the impression of playing a dusty 78 rpm produced decades earlier, as if the disc were the dystopian celebration of a disturbing alternate history, where the Third Reich took over the entire European continent.

To avoid any possible misunderstanding, tracks like *Die Juden sind unser Unglück* ("The Jews are our downfall") are haunting anthems of anti-Semitic black metal and give a clear idea of Wolfnacht's frightful and gory approach, which shows no remorse or compromise:

*«Achtung Jude!*

*Fed up with their six million filthy lies  
Jerusalem will burn when swastika arises  
The holocaust will come, but this time will be real  
No longer Jews will reign, their total death is near  
The concentration camps are open again  
Auschwitz awaits, Jew! Enter the train!»*

The heinous concepts expressed in the lyrics, are promptly reiterated during interviews:



## HELLENIC WERWOLF KOMMANDO

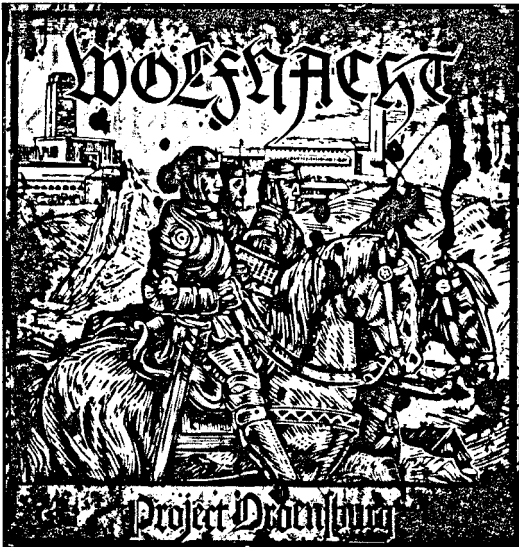
*«The media are under the jewish domination so that public opinion is formed according to the jewish will. [...] The solution is clear: we must show to our People the true ugly face of the hebrew and unveil their servants/collaborationists; teach the kids not to trust the media and not to let others decide for themselves. [...] You already know that our Hellenic race was the biggest enemy of the jew since the ancient times, and that's why the jew is full of hate towards our Fatherland, because our blood is strong and we are not afraid of them, we never were, and one day the jew will fall because of us»<sup>3</sup>.*



*Athalwolf, founder and mastermind of the project Wolfnacht*

As proof of the consideration and credit that Athalwolf's creature enjoys within the National Socialist black metal circle, let's take the review of *Töten Für W.O.T.A.N.* that originally appeared in the fourth issue of the Greek magazine *Paeans of Hate*, where the record is described as "one of the top 10 NSBM albums of all time," and its songs as "some of the best NS masterpieces".

Wolfnacht's last recording efforts, between 2008 and 2011, gave birth to two other works that are particularly popular in the scene, *Zeit der Cherusker* and the

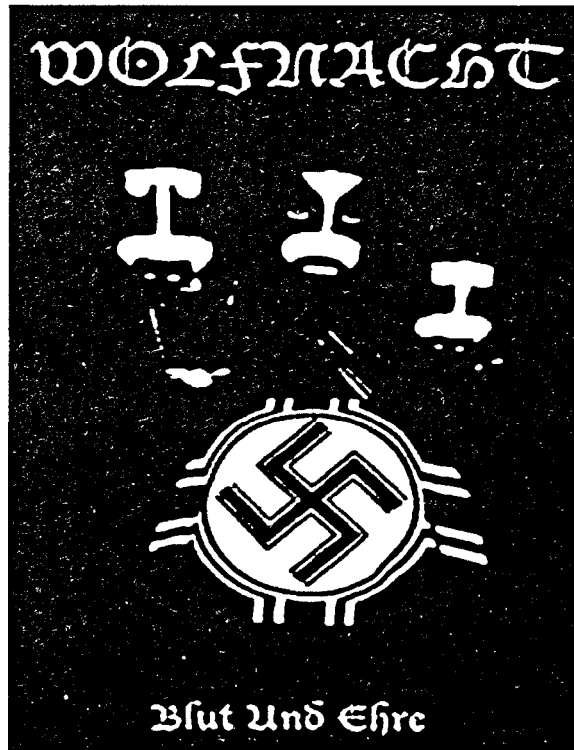


fiery *Project Ordensburg*. The first focuses on the epic of Arminius, leader of the Germanic Cherusci tribes, the protagonist of a historic victory against the Roman legions in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest; the record is harsh and hostile, with barbaric atmospheres, and it has the merit of faithfully capturing the essence of the conflict between the Nordic and Mediterranean people. In this sense, it is rather curious to note, that this album is produced by a Greek who chose to align himself with the opposing side.

*Project Ordensburg*, Athalwolf's

last work, threatens to even overshadow the controversial *Töten Für W.O.T.A.N.* in terms of militancy and anti-Semitic propaganda. Announced for release on November 9, 2011 (an explicit reference to the Beer Hall Putsch, or Munich Putsch of November 9, 1923), it actually became available a month later due to the usual problems with printers that refuse to manufacture products so politically incorrect. The record, titled in reference to the castles that were dedicated to the training of the SS, is accompanied by a full booklet graced by a great attention to detail, where the ideological mission is so explicit and direct that much of the rest of the NSBM scene looks like a bunch of amateurs in comparison.

*«This release contains uncensored symbols and texts, forbidden in all zionist occupied Countries, in*



*The cover of Blut und Ehre (2000), one of the first demos on tape by the infamous band from Corfu*



the name of "democracy" and "freedom of speech". If you feel offended then go cry to your local synagoge...».

Such an ideological storm is accompanied by an aggressive kind of black metal, filled with sophisticated symphonic solutions and catchy arrangements, often light years ahead of many of its compatriots. *Project Ordensburg* is an album that never fails to feed controversies and disputes within black metal circles, taking into account the bloody stigma that it carries.



When looking for newcomers outside of the usual circles, it is worth mentioning the only album produced by the mysterious Freude: *You Are the Front*. Released in 2009, for the Australian label War Doctrine, and lacking any biographical details, the record would easily pass for yet another contemporary RAC product if hastily judged on the basis of the atypical graphics (the cover reproduces a color photo taken during a demonstration of young German nationalists). In reality, *You Are the Front* offers a unique hybrid of dissonant black metal, that evokes curious and almost psychedelic scenarios, through hypnotic and repetitive structures that emerge from the chaotic sound (the eight-minute long *Die Schwarze Sonne* is quite symbolic of this sound). On the whole, however, the long shadows of National Socialist ideology stand out, clearly spelled out in an entire page of the booklet in which the band chose to include a series of Adolf Hitler's mottos.



Looking at NS metal, not necessarily black, it is impossible to avoid naming a band that is considered one of the founders of the worldwide white power

scene: Iron Youth. Their *Proud Hellenic Metal Core* represents the musical equivalent of the political program of the Golden Dawn, an organization that all the band members have been a part of for a long time. Of the three albums released since 1997 (*Durch Das Volk, Mit Dem Volk, Für Das Volk*, followed by *Respect/Defend/Create* in 2001 and *Faith Is Stronger Than Fire* in 2005), the second one, released by Resistance Records, is certainly the one that has had the greatest resonance, propelling the combo under the international spotlight and further contributing to uniting the WP and the metal scene.

In terms of monitoring the phenomenon, we can therefore say that Greece relentlessly continues to fuel the black flame of National Socialist metal and its affiliates, with the added peculiarity of being a country where, more than in any other, we find considerable interpenetration among seemingly antithetical scenes, reaching a level of collaboration and development that has never been seen before. The expansion of



*Golden Dawn militants during an NSBM festival that took place in Italy in February 2012*

NSBM and the interaction at multiple levels between the extreme scene and the young fringes of the Golden Dawn created a new scenario, which was further reinforced by Greece's economic and political difficulties: a situation that has given free reign to the flourishing of nationalist and anti-EU organizations, which have proven to be so vigorous and heartfelt that they have constituted a new theme within the music scene.

A significant example of this phenomenon can be found in the work of Patris, whose logo proudly displays the symbol of Χρυσή Αυγή (Chrysi Avgi, or "Golden Dawn"). Minotaur, the sole mind behind this fledgeling project, defines his style as HNBM (acronym of Hellenic Nationalist Black Metal). Its first record release, the *Servants of Hellenism* EP, consists of raw black metal that is basic and negligible at a technical level but arouses curiosity with its theoretical stance:

*«It must be mentioned that the strife of Patris is CLEARLY IDEOLOGICAL and NOT MUSICAL»<sup>4</sup>.*

Music is therefore not an end but a means, a principle that while not new, is clearly professed in no uncertain terms. The choice to use black metal as a vehicle seems to

reinforce the belief of those who see this style of music as the best-suited medium to convey ancestral concepts related to blood and homeland. Paradoxically, however, the band seems to have clear ideas about its non-placement within both the national scene, and the NSBM one:

*«Patris [...] is a band that is solely interested in the ideological war and wants black metal (meaning a style of music with specific sounds and playing techniques) in the services of Greek nationalism. This genre of music which we have chosen, means for us just another means of expression to exalt the Greek national morale. We have nothing to do with any so-called "greek scene" which consists of followers of chaos and nihilism. On the other hand, it would be a huge mistake if someone associated us with the Greek or the international NSBM (National Socialist) scene, as the main lyrical themes of this scene are "pan-European One", "nordicism", "Third Reich" etc, concepts which are not consistent with Hellenism and healthy Greek nation-*



*alism.. [...] Patris has no connection with Fascism and Nazism. Fascism, which is the expression of the Italian nationalism, and Nazism, which is the expression of the German nationalism, have nothing to do with Hellenism and Greek nationalism. [...] The Greek patriots and nationalists fought the Italian nationalists (Fascists) of Mousolini [sic] who attacked Greece in 1940 and the German nationalists (Nazis) of Hitler during the German occupation in Greece»<sup>5</sup>.*

This thinly veiled criticism made by Minotaur, seems to directly affect some established ensembles, namely *Wolfnacht* and *Der Stürmer*, who easily manage to combine Hellenic patriotism with the glorification of Hitler's regime. It is a rather sharp disaffiliation, which highlights an interesting point: although *Patris'* work is generally labelled as NSBM, it is actually a variation of the "original gene". Once again, the main themes make a difference and dictate the need for a different label that identifies a specific direction, diverging from that of the forefathers. Black metal is not only a means to convey ideologies, but also a malleable and pliable tool, depending on specific needs. A practice that, as we shall see, will find its greatest application in the lands of South America.

Going back to the gravitational center around which a certain slice of ideological black metal seems to orbit, it must be said that the strengthening of some new nationalist impulses seems to go hand in hand with the growth of the *Golden Dawn*. In the wake

of the severe economic situation - taking advantage of widespread, inevitable political tensions - the party, led by Nikolaos Michaloliakos, obtained a surprising level of support: backed by a strong, self-sufficient and openly anti-European political program, it managed to have as many as 21 elected members following the legislative elections of May 6, 2012. The grueling economic policies imposed by the European Union on the Greek State have exacerbated the population's discontent, who then gave their vote - as always happens when institutions are weak - to groups of both the the extreme Left and the extreme Right<sup>6</sup>.

Beyond the complex macroeconomic issues, it is other news that has attracted the interest of music magazines all over the world: one of the elected members of the Golden Dawn is none other than Kaiadas, Naer Mataron's bass player, a band that has been active since the early Nineties, backed by a solid career built through six studio albums. Among these, *Praetorians* stands out. Released in 2008 by Season of Mist, it saw the artistic contribution of Vicotnik, former historic frontman of Norwegian transformists Dødheimsgard, and Henrik Nordvargr Björkk, relentless manipulator of industrial frequencies and mastermind behind many creations (MZ. 412, Folkstorm, Toroidh among others). These important collaborations have not tarnished Naer Mataron's integrity, as they keep playing traditional and harsh black metal, both on the musical and the conceptual front, including all the anti-Christian paraphernalia, and they are devoted to the dictates of the primeval genre. Given the obvious difference between Kaiadas' music and his personal journey, the band, after political consultations felt the need to release an official statement in order to explain the issue. A necessary clarification to crush the controversy and rumors that would easily label Naer Mataron as a political band:

*«To anyone who may be concerned.*

*Naer Mataron has been and still remains a pure blooded black metal band, and as such, a non-political one. Any member of the band has the right to keep his personal beliefs and act accordingly. Therefore, any kind of legal political activity of any member, is a matter of personal choice and is respected as such.*

*Attempts to put Naer Mataron under any political agenda are rejected by the band.*

*In addition, any false accusations against the band will come across legal actions on our behalf.»<sup>7</sup>*

This press release offers us the opportunity to consider implications beyond the specific case: to what extent is it possible to separate bands (and what they represent) from the beliefs of their members? It is obvious that the lyrical concepts and aesthetics of a band are a direct result of their members' orientation, but it is equally true that one can make gross errors of assessment when generalizing too much. In the specific case of NSBM, a sort of preventive justice tends to prevail among the music media. When in doubt, the media finds that it is better to label and censor a band for its alleged political connections rather than taking the risk of offering support and being condemned.

A modus operandi that often contributes to distorting the actual number of NS bands out there, and takes all those who are, in one way or another, linked to people, events or groups regarded as controversial and places them under the category of politically incorrect. Paradoxically then, the excessive zeal in carrying out an obstructionism whose intent is to weaken the genre ends up swelling the ranks (at least on paper) and does not allow for proper contextualization of the phenomenon.



Referring to what we addressed a few lines above, we must add that in recent years there have been countless bands that have flaunted a bogeyman of shadows and Nazi proclamations to attract attention to their (often mediocre) musical career, a convenient tactic to attract the limelight that can also be a particularly sharp double-edged sword. In fact, many of these newborn "Hitler's Youth" repudiate all the evidence and make a vigorous U-turn as soon as the situation starts to be extremely uncomfortable. This kind of behavior is more widespread than one might think: entering the dark tunnel of NSBM can be costly, and one does not always come out of it unharmed or spotless. What we just said though, does not even remotely reflect Der Stürmer's modus operandi. Quite the contrary:

*«When we decided to form Der Stürmer, there were only a bunch of bands that were using NS topics in their lyrics. NSBM is the propaganda branch of black metal, it is the spear-head driven deep within the heart of the liberal metalloid scene. NSBM must be considered as a weapon, as a medium of reawakening. Within the true NSBM scene we try to enlist all those who are ABLE and WILLING to fight, those who put ideals and the cause above a prison sentence. The good thing within the NSBM scene is that a fake band won't last for too long, because they are afraid of being imprisoned or "stigmatized" as a Nazi. That's why most of the bands whimp out after a while... I can give you dozens of bands that tried to be part of the NSBM scene but changed their mind and jumped to the safety of the "misanthropic", "nihilist", "suicidal" or other branch of modern "black metal". Fuck the cowards! Black metal is war, and those who are not willing to fight will be trampled upon!»<sup>8</sup>.*

*«If you'll take a look in the past 15 years, when black metal was reborn as a weapon against judeo-christianity and not as just another subculture of the metal genre, you'll see that serious bands such as Burzum, Graveland or Absurd, were highly motivated by racism, blood and heritage. This is the true face of black metal. This is the flame of vengeance against every decayed value of liberalism. Whore-bands like Mayhem, Gorgoroth, Dimmu Borgir, Behemoth, etc., have nothing to do with black metal, they are simply "extreme rockers", harmless entertainers with an extreme outlook [...] Yes, we support the label NSBM, the true black metal cause: the crushing fist against every liberal trend and subculture of modernity»<sup>9</sup>.*

Let's take a step back and try to trace the origins of the band that will be considered among the strongest and most long-lived supporters of the National Socialist creed within the black metal scene. The first great leap backward takes us to Athens at the end of 1993, when Jarl Von Hagall and Hjarulv Henker (the pseudonyms they will later adopt in Der Stürmer) joined forces in a project of atmospheric music called Lamentation. The band produced a handful of dark ambient demos characterized by massive use of keyboards and synths, long instrumental melancholy and gothic suites strongly influenced by the folklore of obscure European medieval legends. It is easy to get an idea of the feeling that Lamentation were trying to evoke by simply going through the titles of their songs: *Mist Hides My Land, My Path As Twilight Marks, Hear the Distant Roar of the Upcoming Storm*, not to mention the lofty war names chosen by the duo: Count Amothus Wrathven and Prince Locathah.

Although in terms of sound and themes Lamentation can be associated with Norway's Wongraven, or what Emperor's notorious former bassist Mortii did on his early records, the seeds of the propaganda machine called Der Stürmer already began to take root and spread with this first band. As evidence, read some of the statements made by Prince Locathah:

*«It's known that all the European governments are servants of the Judeo-American lobby. Everything is at the dirty hands of the Jews: banks, newspapers and media generally, casinos, everything that gives them more power and money»<sup>10</sup>.*

*«My beliefs concentrate to the archetype of the Aryan demi-god and his mission. The man with iron will, the Superman that has the power to create and destroy. He who will bring the new order of things, as Adolf Hitler and German occultists like Guido Von List and Jorg Lanz dream it»<sup>11</sup>.*

*«The godlike origin of the Aryans must be defended through the blood. The mythic past must be reborn. The racial downfall is because of the Aryan's decline. The reason for this decline is their mix with an inferior human kind»<sup>12</sup>.*

Prince Locathah goes much further, suggesting scenarios that touch upon the theorems of astroarcheology and the foundations of the so-called homo galactica that we have already talked about.

Later, Lamentation will change their name to Nachtkaiser, but the real breakthrough will take place after meeting with



*The Greek trio Der Stürmer*



The first page of the famous propaganda magazine published by Julius Streicher

day, owes its fame to its uncompromising anti-Semitic hatred and relentless racial proselytism. At the end of the war, its founder was found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by hanging.

The band itself admits and boasts that Der Stürmer's first steps introduced them as bearers of particularly rough and primitive black metal with RAC influences and musical references that embraced the sound of bands like Absurd, War88, Schwarze Sonne and Spear of Longinus (with whom they will never manage to accomplish a much discussed collaboration). When in the autumn of 2001, the band released its first actual full-length, titled *The Blood Calls for W.A.R.!*, the explicit Nazi apology left little to the imagination: the symbol of the black sun stands out on the inner artwork, while the remaining layout is a triumph of German war propaganda images dating back to the second World War. If the nine songs sound particularly abrasive musically, the lyrics do too:

*«In this society ruled by the Jews  
We are the ones that resist to all  
Our dream is to destroy your "beautiful" world  
Our dream is to save our land from the Zionist's hands»<sup>14</sup>*

their friend Commando Wolf and his Wintergods. The premise of a split album between the two bands will evolve suddenly during a plan for long-term partnership, that will see the trio engaged in shaping Der Stürmer. During September 1998, the chosen name will briefly be Herrenblut, but this embryonic attempt will be discarded in favor of a much more feared moniker with an explicit reference to Nazism:

*«We chose this name as Der Stürmer was the biggest and the most intolerant anti-Jewish piece of propaganda. Same ideology, same goals!»<sup>13</sup>*

In addition to the name, the logo of the band is also taken from the infamous Nazi propaganda newspaper published from 1923 to 1945 by Julius Streicher, then Gauleiter of Franconia. A magazine that, even to-

A minimal production, elementary arrangements and few frills (except for the use of discontinuous samplings to introduce the tracks) are used for a record that exudes anti-Semitic propaganda to the core. Songs glorifying the last Germanic Reich blend seamlessly with invectives against the Jewish people and the capitalist system, non-European immigration and so on. The album is an explosive concentration of racist anti-system claims with a rawness of language that goes far beyond arid provocation, aiming to ferociously topple the values that underpin today's Western democracies. The white power-inspired territorial claims of songs like *Hearts Full of Hate* provide a perfect example:



*Jarl Von Hagall, Der Stürmer's vocalist in a picture dating back to the end of the Nineties*

*«White angry Aryan supremacists  
Won't tolerate scum in our lands  
Fuckin' immigrant-loving filth  
Hear the blasting roar of our guns*

*Intolerant, Angry and full of hate  
Hunt down every foreign ape  
Aryan, strong and full of pride  
Let none escape the fury of the whites»*

The culmination of the entire operation, in terms of sound and ideology, is represented by the title track which, starting with the acronym used for the term "war" (W.A.R. or White Aryan Resistance), offers a concentrate of murderous hatred that takes no prisoners.

What is obvious from Der Stürmer's sound is their choice to stick to a basic black metal mold, devoid in its innermost essence of all that "satanic" and/or "demonic" outgrowth that has fundamentally defined the scene like a trademark. Therefore, there is no longer a need to summon the underworld to proclaim their contempt for the Judeo-Christian worldview: the sulphurous solutions of satanic assault employed by the majority of such





Special edition reissue on vinyl of  
The Blood Calls for W.A.R. (2006)

bands are replaced by an incessant propaganda that is (slightly) mystical and (very) ideological. However, this penchant for black metal's politicized nature does not preclude possible collaborations or alliances with more orthodox groups, as clarified on several occasions by members of the band:

*«I have no problem with Satanists that are aware of their Aryan roots and promote a Nietzschean way of life and the shadowside of the European folklore. Fuck liberal egoists, Hollywood Satanists and "orthodox - religious" Yiddish biblical bullshit...»<sup>15</sup>.*

*«Personally I'm not into Satanism, I'd prefer to see Aryans turn to Aryan heathenism and the warrior ethics. Yet, we need as many people as possible among our ranks and the more extreme and fanatical the better [...] Presently, I don't see many satanic bands or orgs that are that much into NS or racialism. [...] On the other hand, there are bands/individuals who are into Satanism (important: not the Laveyan shit!!!) but they are also supporting (and take part in) our cause: bands like Satanic Warmaster, Deathkey/Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, Nastrond, Inquisition, Altar of Perversion, Evil Incarnate, Emit, etc., have my full support...»<sup>16</sup>.*

Although it is glaringly spelled out that Der Stürmer are devoted to a radical paganism, in line with the dictates of the new genre of which they are the standard bearers:

*«The ancestral creed of paganism is one of the main principles of NSBM. Paganism is an integral part of National Socialism and the goal of NSBM and organizations like The Pagan Front is to spread the values of paganism in the underground black metal scene. [...] I am Loyal to the Olympian gods and the other deities of the Hellenic pantheon as I am loyal to the Aesir gods and the gods of the Celtic, Slavic or Hindu (Indo-Aryan religion of the Vedas) tradition»<sup>17</sup>.*

The period between the late Nineties and the beginning of the new millennium proves to be feverishly active along several additional fronts, with members of the band engaged in multidisciplinary projects ranging from the management of labels and the editing of fanzines, to involvement in Greek neo-Nazi organizations. The music, as stated,



is just one of the many means used by the trio with the sole purpose of disseminating the watchwords of the Nazi creed, through the Old and New World.

In this sense, the work of Commando Wolf stands out above everything else. His Totenkopf Propaganda music label will churn out dozens of records to support the NSBM scene over the years, involving names such as Absurd, Aryan Blood, Capricorn, Branikald, and Nitberg among others. His personal fanzine, Wallachian Tyrant (currently on standby), is still regarded as a cult item by the followers of the most extreme black metal. To date, there are only four issues that came out in a period of time ranging from 1995 to 2003, but in spite of the minimal output, the mere fact that it dealt with the founding themes and very first NSBM bands makes it a real institution of its kind. It is only comparable to the fanzine Hatemonger, its idealistic overseas sister of redneck imprint, edited more or less in the the same period by the frontman of Xenophobia.

The first issue of Wallachian Tyrant, depicting a pentacle on the cover with two Fascist emblems placed on the sides, betrays that sort of "occult Fascism" ready to slip into "Nazi-Satanism" which, as we have seen, had begun to gather several followers during the mid-Nineties. The contents, although still strictly music related, show all the potential of a scene in its embryonic stage, among bands that have already taken a political stance, others that are still hiding and others that are compliant (although later on they might take some distance). The insights in Karl Maria Wiligut's "Himmler's Rasputin" represent the first sign of an indoctrination that will be progressively reinforced. In fact, starting with the second issue, which came out in 1998, things become extremely explicit, with a monolithic/monothematic style: priority was given to all the openly Right-wing bands (Thor's Hammer, Evil, Graveland...) and to articles that ranged from the interpretation of Heinrich Himmler's work from a magical perspective to European folklore. But it is the third issue, which saw the light two years later, that consecrates every aspect of this sub-genre that took its first steps in the pages of Wallachian Tyrant: "*National Socialism: the way of the wolf amongst the sheep*" is the title that graces the cover, and on this particular

occasion the newborn NSBM scene is covered far and wide. Therefore, unlimited space without censorship is granted to bands like Germany's Bilskirnir, Poland's Galgenberg, France's Kristallnacht, and the notorious Detroit hatecore band Angry Aryans, placed next to articles celebrating George Lincoln Rockwell, the white nationalist leader Robert Jay Mathews, the relations between the Nazi regime and the Christian religion, as well as the meaning of the Aryan identity, and the Golden Dawn. The last published issue, dating back to 2003, relies on the proven formula of propaganda that sees a large part of the magazine devoted to interviews with bands like Sturm, Halgadam, Iron Youth, Hakenkreuzzug, Wodulf and others, coupled together with insights on the symbolism of the wolf, matters of comparative mythology, and esoteric Nazism, as well as a unique report on the German NSBM scene of the time.

During those years, the whole band Der Stürmer also stands out for their constant militancy in the aforementioned organization *Chrysi Avgi*:

*«We are not just sympathizers, we are active members since years. Golden Dawn exists since about 25 years and it have organized countless demonstrations, manifestations, speeches and various other political activities in the streets, as well as many publications [...] It's one of the longest-running and most active NS movements worldwide»<sup>18</sup>.*



Returning to the purely musical aspect of things, the beginning of the millennium saw Der Stürmer engaged in intense activity to consolidate the connections between the Greek and Polish scenes. After all, both of these nations can be counted among the largest producers and distributors of NSBM worldwide. Historical bands, as well as vast numbers of young followers who voluntarily joined the ranks of ideologized black metal, are actually rooted in the Mediterranean peninsula or in the lands bordering with the Baltic Sea.

Der Stürmer offered major contributions, releasing three split albums with bands of Polish origin: Capricorn, Galgenberg and War88, which soon became collector's items for fans (and non-fans) of the scene.

«Capricornus is one of our closest comrades since years now. War88 is for us a totally cult, real underground horde from the shores of Gdynia from mighty Pomerania. Galgeneberg is another great Silesian band which we liked a lot – their music and attitude. In my opinion, all three releases were brilliant, the response from the comrades was also very good»<sup>19</sup>.

Despite the works shared with Galgenberg and War88, the ultimate expression of the Athens-Warsaw Axis was realized in an album made with Capricornus, titled *Polish-Hellenic Alliance Against Z.O.G.!*, whose extraordinary success led to a series of reissues of the original CD format, followed by editions on tape and a luxurious collectors edition on vinyl. This album represented a curious Polish-Hellenic alliance that clearly manifests its specific intent in the liner notes:

«This release is dedicated to Hendrik Möbus and all our comrades serving time in ZOG dungeons. To those, who despite the pressure and the intimidation of ZOG and their puppets, are still standing true to the NS Cause and heed the voice of blood, ready for victory or Valhalla!».

In addition to the usual words of hatred, revenge and vengeance that find Der Stürmer engaged in a celebration of the return of a hypothetical new era of Aryan triumph, the song with the most reprehensible and controversial qualities turns out to be *The Nailbomber*, which is also given a special mention in the booklet:

«*The Nailbomber*» is for David Copeland, a white man who decided to follow the path of action».



David John Copeland, a militant of the British National Party and the National Socialist Movement, was a young English terrorist who tarnished his reputation at the end of the Nineties with a series of barbaric attacks against the foreign and homosexual population residing in the suburbs of London. In April 1999, Copeland, then in his early twenties, began a three week long campaign of terror using rudimentary bombs made of nails and gunpowder. At the time of his capture, the body

count included three dead (including a pregnant woman) and over a hundred injured with some of them seriously maimed. In laying out the reasons which had led him to such murderous acts, Copeland said the influence came from writings such as *The Turner Diaries*<sup>20</sup> and the will to act in order to trigger a race war that, according to his intent, would have raised the British people against foreigners and vice versa. Found guilty of all the charges against him, he was sentenced to six life sentences in the summer of 2000.

Despite the rather debatable attack method of leaving explosives in areas frequented by homosexuals, Africans and Pakistani, but left at random (so that a considerable part of his victims would be white people), Der Stürmer still praised Copeland as a revered symbol of the Aryan resistance. In *The Nailbomber*, the then twenty-two years old Cove (Southern England) native, is considered a martyr for the cause of liberation of his country, according to the words chosen by Jarl Von Hagall:

*«Niggers & pakis, race-traitors & queers  
None will escape from his wrath  
Through streets of London  
The lonewolf he comes  
His mission is plain & clear  
Race war!»*

The song is pretty weak on a technical level (it is much more loosely "RAC oriented" than real black metal) and has an uncertain beat, but the lyrical content shows high levels of an attitude charged with contempt and disdain for those who are considered as their enemies.

There will be further sound incursions in collaboration with like-minded bands, like the split albums with Germany's Totenburg and Brazil's Evil, as well as the surprising alliance with two American bands: the standard-bearers of "totalitarian death metal" Argghoslent and the caustic Mudoven, the latter authors of explicit and violent racial invectives. For Der Stürmer, the chance of this latter collaboration on clear vinyl (still a particularly sought-after production, by both supporters and simple collectors) with like-minded bands will be likened to being able *«...to plant yet another nail in the coffin of politically correct "black metal"...»*.

The final leap in quality, however, will happen between 2005 and 2006, with the recording and release of the first actual full-length for the Greek band: *A Banner Greater Than Death*. This work will consecrate Der Stürmer as a concentration of hatred and militancy that places them on the pedestal of fathers/founders of the whole NSBM scene: the topics dealt with range from Aryan esotericism to blatantly anti-Semitic passages, inspired *«from the modern state of Europe, as this is compared with the forgotten and often deliberately ignored past»*.

Announced and postponed several times, the album paid the price for a particularly aggressive layout that immediately put the Czech manufacturer in charge of its production (in both analog and digital versions) on alert. The delays continued due to the difficulty of finding a printer willing get his hands dirty with the artwork of the album. Starting with the cover, which contains a photo dating from the time of the German invasion of Greece in the spring of 1941, swastikas and aesthetics of the Regime proliferate. Among the anti-Semitic rants and Nazi propaganda, it is clear that there are very few mitigating circumstances on this record attributable to artistic licenses of any kind.

After several failed attempts, *A Banner Greater Than Death* finally received the green light and it was released in CD format, followed by an edition on classic black vinyl limited to 500 copies. The label responsible for the production and distribution was the Spanish Die Todesrune Records, run by a young Romanian immigrant in Madrid and already known for having relased records by Spear of Longinus, Goatpenis and Antisemitex.



The album consists of ten tracks, or rather ten earthquakes, opening with *Dawning Israel's Perdition*, yet another declaration of war against Judaism, and particularly against the State of Israel:

*«Glaring dawn of Israel's perdition  
Glorious day of Yahwe's fall  
Thousand boots march on hebrew ground  
Defiling the sanctum of the yiddish nest»*

The album continues, inexorable and monolithic, taking a one way groove along which we encounter all those thematic splinters that make up the the crux of the NSBM arsenal: the myth of the blood (*Arr-Hammer*), the contempt and the desire for redemption against the modern world (*Defiance*), the consequences of the Kali-Yuga in the shadow of Savitri Devi's prophecies (*Last Battalion's Marching*), and the celebration of the martyrs of the failed Beer Hall Putsch of November 9, 1923 (*Baptized by the Blood of the Fallen*).

## HELLENIC WERWOLF KOMMANDO

Setting aside the additional hymns of glory and revenge, the decision to dedicate a song to *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London may seem surprising. In this case, however, the notes in the booklet are useful, as the band offers a no-frills explanation of the reasons behind the black metal outbursts of *Ancestral Wolfcall*:

*«The lyrics of this song describe the life of a dog that left a calm life and found his racial instincts to become a free wolf and joined his kin into the deep forests [...] Let this be an example for all those who rest to a calm, dishonoured life, and turn into slaves of technology».*

The match ends with the song that sums up the entire path of *A Banner Greater Than Death*, that is, *Adolf der Grosse* ("Adolf the Great"), an explicit celebration of the man that Der Stürmer worship like a god descended to earth. The choice of samples that open and are inserted in the track, further fuel a fanatical hagiography of Hitler, who is described as the invincible warlord, runemaster and immortal leader, ready to rise from the ashes of the hated Western democracies. Lyrics that balance abuse and echoes of prophecy, while waiting for a utopian dawn in which the whole National Socialist movement will find resurgence.

**CARELIAN PAGAN MADNESS  
TOUR 2008**

**1.2 TAMPERE: We have a NEW CONCERT PLACE!**  
For more info at: [furore.finnum@gmail.com](mailto:furore.finnum@gmail.com)

**Der Stürmer**  
(Fin)

**Goatmoon** (Fin)

**FUCK OFF ALL YOU ANTIFA BASTARDS!**  
**YOU WILL NEVER WIN THIS WAR!**

In the summer of 2007, the Greek band was contacted by Furore Finnum, a fierce Finnish group willing to arrange a Northern European mini tour in early 2008. The agreements led directly to the so-called Carelian Pagan Madness tour, which involved four heavyweights of the European underground: the local bands of Goatmoon and Satanic Warmaster, along with Germany's Absurd and, of course, Der Stürmer. Only two concerts were scheduled for the first days of February, one in Tampere, followed the next day by one in Turku. The Finnish media became inflamed with TV and magazine reports and all sorts of exhortations to boycott the

event were made. Despite pressure from authorities and anti-Fascist groups neither of the two gigs were canceled. On the contrary: the concert in Tampere, which took place in a well-known metal venue, even sold out due to fanatical supporters and people just looking for live music.

*«We found out that the day we entered Finland, the Finnish police contacted the Hellenic one, gave our names and asked if we had criminal records in order to stop us at the borders [...] All this is quite laughable not only because of their comical nature, but because these people think that they can stop us by simply writing some words in some forums or their bosses publish some articles in local newspapers. That's not something new of course, all these things happened to us in the past plenty of times. Photos in newspapers, lyrics translated and published, phone threats and even some notes on our front doors»<sup>23</sup>.*



*A sample of the inner graphics of the vinyl Carelian Pagan Madness (2010)  
created using Finnish press cuttings about the live event*

Back home, Der Stürmer sought to capitalize on the success of the Finnish dates, and in collaboration with the infamous American label Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, released a live album as evidence of the tour. Rich in inserts and limited to only 500 copies, the black vinyl of *Carelian Pagan Madness* (the chosen title which used the name of the live event word for word) was meant as a real celebratory fetish, a gash in the face of those who tried to oppose their performances; not surprisingly, the inner sleeve that holds the LP is made up of a patchwork of Finnish articles complaining about the presence of Der Stürmer in the Nordic towns where the concerts took place. As expected, the malignant aura of the band and the questionable reputation of the label responsible for the production of *Carelian Pagan Madness* turned it into a real cult item, which sold out in a flash and can now only be found with great difficulty in the collectors' market.

Beyond their live exploits, 2008 would be a particularly important year for Der Stürmer as they celebrated their tenth year of activity. For the occasion, Totenkopf Propaganda





February 2012,  
Der Stürmer play live in Italy

mind the previous work by Der Stürmer on the track *The Nailhammer*, which appeared on the split album with Capricornus eight years earlier:

«Face homo lupus!  
The tobit decal is unleashed

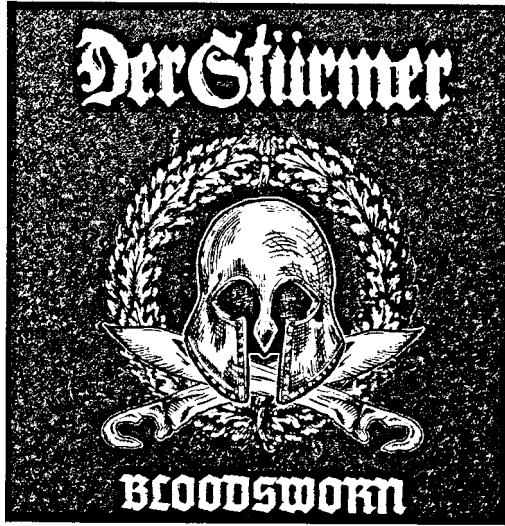
and Death Squad Rex released a retrospective collection of all of the band's singles and compilation contributions: *Bloodsworn (1998-2008 The First Decade)*, which was released both on CD and double LP, and reissued several times, shows the - albeit slim - technical and stylistic evolution of the trio, and demonstrates the blind militancy that constantly places them at the forefront, heedless of everything and everyone.

In the late summer of 2011 the band returned to the fray with a new full-length, *Transcendental Racial Idealism*, consisting of nine tracks that follow the path taken with *A Banner Greater Than Death*, with no particular disguise or noticeable changes of direction. The basic ingredients are summed up in a set of tributes to military bravery mixed with *jus sanguinis*, Hitler mythology and racial intolerance, all wrapped up in a form of heroic pessimism that refers to an idea of resistance that is rooted in traditional thinking. The graphics of the record, edited by Antichrist Kramer of Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, strengthen the alliance with the American sound terrorist, which began during the production of the live album<sup>24</sup>.

The most controversial and explicitly racist song on the album is probably *Day of the Hunter*: the lyric, written by Hjarulv Henker, is a tribute to the American killer Joseph Paul Franklin, notorious murderer of interracial couples that is ruthlessly described in the liner notes as «... a man who has decided to take action instead of complaining»<sup>25</sup>. The song cannot help but bring to

*To speak his anger through the gun  
To purify this world of mongrels!»*

Almost fifteen years after their birth, Der Stürmer remain one of the most explicit and extreme (as well as debated) bands in the entire NSBM milieu. Aware of their role as heavyweights of the scene, they willingly choose to align with the Latin motto that appears at the entrance of their virtual stronghold on the Internet: «*Bellum contra omnes*», at war with everyone.



### Notes:

- 1 - Der Stürmer, from *Paeans of Hate* n. 1, January 2008.
- 2 - The Shadow Order, from *Resistance* n. 21, Spring/Summer 2003.
- 3 - Wolfnacht, from *Paeans of Hate* n. 4, 2009.
- 4 - Patris, from the band's official website ([www.patris-hellas.gr](http://www.patris-hellas.gr)).
- 5 - Ibid.
- 6 - In addition to the Golden Dawn, which collected nearly 7% of the votes, the other emblematic result of the May 2012 election was the 17% of preferences granted to the far-Left coalition SYRIZA.
- 7 - Naer Mataron, from the band's official Facebook page, May 2012.
- 8 - Der Stürmer, from *Breidablik*, 2007.
- 9 - Der Stürmer, from *Legeones*, 2006.
- 10 - Lamentation, from *Hatemonger* n.1, 1996.
- 11 - Ibid.
- 12 - Ibid.
- 13 - Der Stürmer, from *Einsatzkommando*, 2006.
- 14 - Excerpt from the song by Der Stürmer *When Totenkopf Rises*.
- 15 - Wodulf, from *Aryan Sturm Front*.
- 16 - Der Stürmer, from *Legeones*, 2006.

## HELLENIC WERWOLF KOMMANDO

17 - Der Stürmer, from Blood & Honour (Croatia), 2006.

18 - Ibid.

19 - Der Stürmer, from Einsatzkommando, 2006.

20 - *The Turner Diaries* is a novel written under a pseudonym (Andrew Macdonald) in 1978 by William Pierce (1933-2002), one of the leading characters within the American contemporary white nationalism milieu. The story tells of a hypothetical future in which the U.S. federal government is overthrown by a militia of white patriots, and the resulting racial war that covered the entire nation in blood. Over the years, this book has become a huge success and it has spread beyond the American extreme Right. It is considered the equivalent of a sort of Bible by many militant racists.

21 - Der Stürmer, from Blasphemer n.2, 2006.

22 - Der Stürmer, from Breidablik, 2007.

23 - Der Stürmer, from Cross of Black Steel n.3, 2011.

24 - Speaking of live events, an exclusive foray of Der Stürmer on Italian soil was announced in December 2011. The event was actualized two months later, on February 25, 2012. The evening, set in a desolate venue in the countryside of the province of Pavia, was named Hot Shower Fest and saw the descent of about 200 participants from all over Europe to attend the performance of four selected bands. Army of Helvete, the only Italian project (and substantially out of place compared to the others) opened for the triad of explicit NSBM bands consisting of Wolfenbords (Croatia), Dark Fury (Poland) and, as headliners, Der Stürmer. In line with what they had already done during the Finnish tour, the band chose to go on a completely dark stage accompanied by funeral Wagnerian arias in the background. Passing over the excesses of the audience (such as the display of flags with swastikas and Celtic crosses, cheers and salutes), the setlist was evenly distributed between old and new songs, including an encore with pure RAC incursions like *When Totenkopf Rises* (a song that appeared for the first time on one of their demos titled *Siegruppen*, over a decade ago).

25 - Between 1976 and 1980 Joseph Paul Franklin became the protagonist behind an impressive list of anti-Semitic attacks and racially motivated murders. Among his most sensational stunts is the sniping that put the famous publisher of adult material, Larry Flynt, in a wheelchair. Born in Alabama with the name James Clayton Vaughn, he decided to legally change it in his early twenties, in honor of Nazi hierarch Paul Joseph Goebbels and American founding father Benjamin Franklin.

# The NSBM Publishing Industry

*«THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD»<sup>1</sup>*

[EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON]

**L**ike all the particularly radical underground movements, it was inevitable that a phenomenon like NSBM should carve itself a unique niche even in terms of printed paper. The publishing industry dedicated to “mainstream” extreme metal pursues schemes and a marketing logic (because it is still “commercial” music) that are incompatible with such a subversive scene, stigmatized and, therefore, decidedly counterproductive. In this sense, the option offered by the fanzines (self-produced magazines by the supporters of the scene) was the only concrete and feasible one, in order to spread the word of this fringe of black metal devoted to this unique form of neo-Nazism.

We have already mentioned that the first outputs on printed paper within the NSBM scene date back to the mid-Nineties and were the prerogative of Greek ‘zines like *Dark Imperium* and *Wallachian Tyrant* (both edited by members of *Der Stürmer*) followed closely, on the other side of the Atlantic, by the the noisy graphic ferocity of *Hatemonger*, a ‘zine from Illinois published by *Xenophobia*’s leader, Brian James Moudry. There have been other publishing initiatives in areas such as Eastern Europe (eg. Poland with the caustic *Legion* magazine, edited by *Capricornus*), but it is also true that, regardless of the geographical coordinates, the essential feature to ensure that these projects could boast a worthy international distribution was always the use of the English language. Although shaky and sometimes



confusing, it was the "broken English" of enthusiasts scattered across Europe that ensured the diffusion of this particular form of black metal.

The issues of each single publication can often be counted on one hand, but despite the quantity and the actual continuity, the propaganda impact of this pile of photocopies has been nothing short of huge for the scene. We are talking about DIY productions, often distributed by word of mouth, that served as the best possible recruitment service in the ranks of the first wave of NSBM during the Nineties.

The originators of the species have spawned dozens of imitators and followers, such as Into The Pentagram, Dark Blaze, Aryan Black Metal Forum, Wotanjugend, Heathen Pride, Paeans of Hate, Der Wehrwolf, Heathen Call, Storm of Ravens, and To Win or to Die. The variety of covered topics is impressive, ranging from the usual reviews to gig reports, historical essays with an obvious revisionist slant and brief articles on Aryanism, theosophy, and the Atlantean myth. In the most extreme cases, there would be actual "recipes" for the young terrorist, with instructions on how to make high-potential homemade bombs! A bunch of themes that could not be fea-

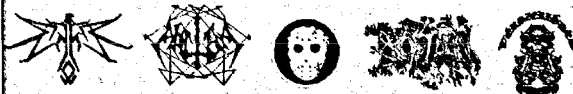
# Der Wehrwolf



Ausgabe 2

KOMM    Selbsttod

Massenvernichtung Blood Iron DRACULINA



WOTANJUGEND Battlecry Asgardreich ...

tured anywhere else except such underground publications devoted to the most extreme fringe of black metal. Where there was a lack of 'zines devoted to NSBM, mutual support was offered in the pages of pagan pan-European magazines like Heathen Call, Ghost Kommand or Heathen Hammer, to name a few.

In Italy too, we can find a self-produced publication that, in recent years, has shown much more than a simple interest in National Socialist black metal: Satan's Sadist. With its eighth issue (aptly renamed "n. 88"), the fanzine showed its commitment to the NSBM scene with over 50 pages dedicated to bands like Dark Fury, Xenophobia, Der Stürmer, MS18th, Wolfenhords, Grand Belial's Key, Kristallnacht, Iron Youth, and so on. Satan's Sadist is followed by its sister publication Aryan RegardSS, another amateur fanzine

produced in a handful of copies that gathers the heritage of Kampfrune88, an earlier project by Aryan Wolf (pseudonym of the author of both 'zines).

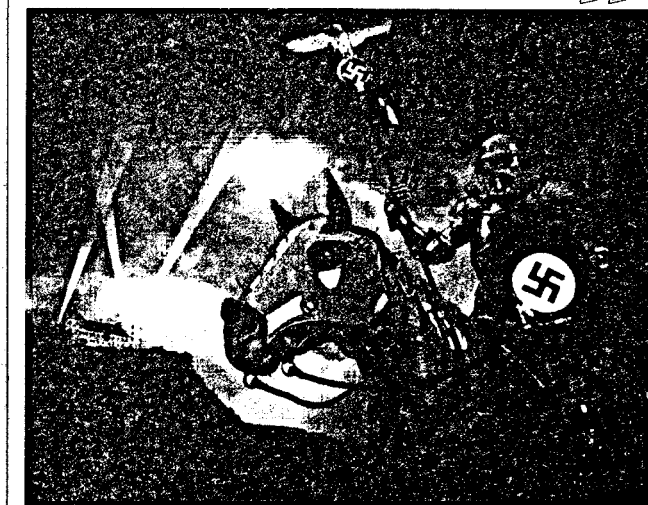
Other channels that have facilitated the propagation of the NSBM belief over the years were those offered by various magazines dedicated to the skinhead scene and white nationalism in general. Starting with the glossy pages of Resistance, Nordland, RAC along with the various international editions of Blood & Honour, these publications continued with the more heterogeneous pamphlets in black and white in the style of the controversial Italian fanzine The Stormer. The latter is particularly well-known in the NS scene probably because of its longevity: in 2012 it celebrated its tenth year.

Distancing ourselves from the kind of press that is closely linked to the scene (and thus clearly compliant), the more mainstream music magazines often give in to sensationalism that offers little room for an in-depth or objective analysis of the phenomenon: due to the roughness of the subject, it is not hard to understand the mechanisms of purely commercial imprint that led more than one regularly sold magazine

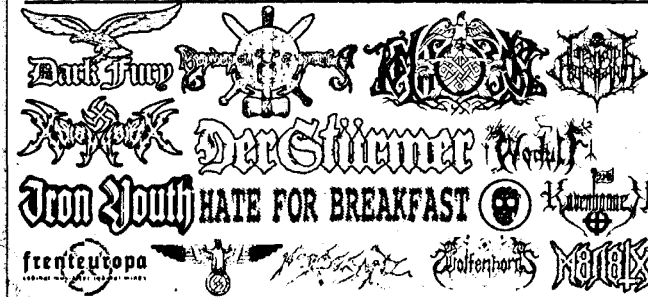


*"United Aryan Terror": Timothy McVeigh, responsible for the 1995 attack in Oklahoma City, and David Myatt. An example of antisocial propaganda reproduced inside NSBM publications*

# ARYAN REGARDSS



THE VOICE OF THE ANCESTOR



fronteuropea

to dedicate a few pages to the phenomenon. Among the lot, the article by the American monthly metal magazine *Decibel* in the spring of 2006<sup>2</sup> stands out, and the analysis of the neo-Nazi metal phenomenon made in 2007 by the Teutonic Rock Hard magazine, which lists the names of bands, labels, and distributors related to the scene, with particular attention to exposing the sprawling resources of the Pagan Front<sup>3</sup>. At the end of 2010, however, it is the British mag *Zero Tolerance* that devotes a couple of pages to the conflicting relationship between the anti-Fascist movement and the different facets of extreme metal, NSBM above all. The article is also topped with some brief comments by people more or less involved in the scene, such as Mikko Aspa (Clandestine Blaze, Northern Heritage Records), Satanic Tyrant Werwolf (Satanic Warmaster), Jarl Von Hagall (Der Stürmer), Antichrist Kramer (Satanic Skinhead Propaganda) and an activist of the Anti Fascist Action movement<sup>4</sup>. A few months later, this time in Italy, it was the magazine *Inferno Rock* that put the spotlight on the scene, with a special feature focused on NSBM (also accompanied by a in-depth dossier on esoteric Nazism). It must be said that the Italian article provides a good overview of the scene, showing - albeit within the limits imposed by this kind of publication - a good knowledge of the phenomenon, articulated and detailed enough to give the reader all the information needed for any subsequent research<sup>5</sup>.

Occasionally, "Nazi metal" is also mentioned in national newspapers as well as unpretentious entertainment magazines, but in such cases the results are far from memorable, taking into account the fact that in the vast majority of cases the journalists behind such articles have no knowledge on the subject. The very first lines betray an abuse of "copy and paste" from the Internet, and more often than not, there is neither rhyme nor reason to the contents, which are left hanging between sensationalism and misinformation.

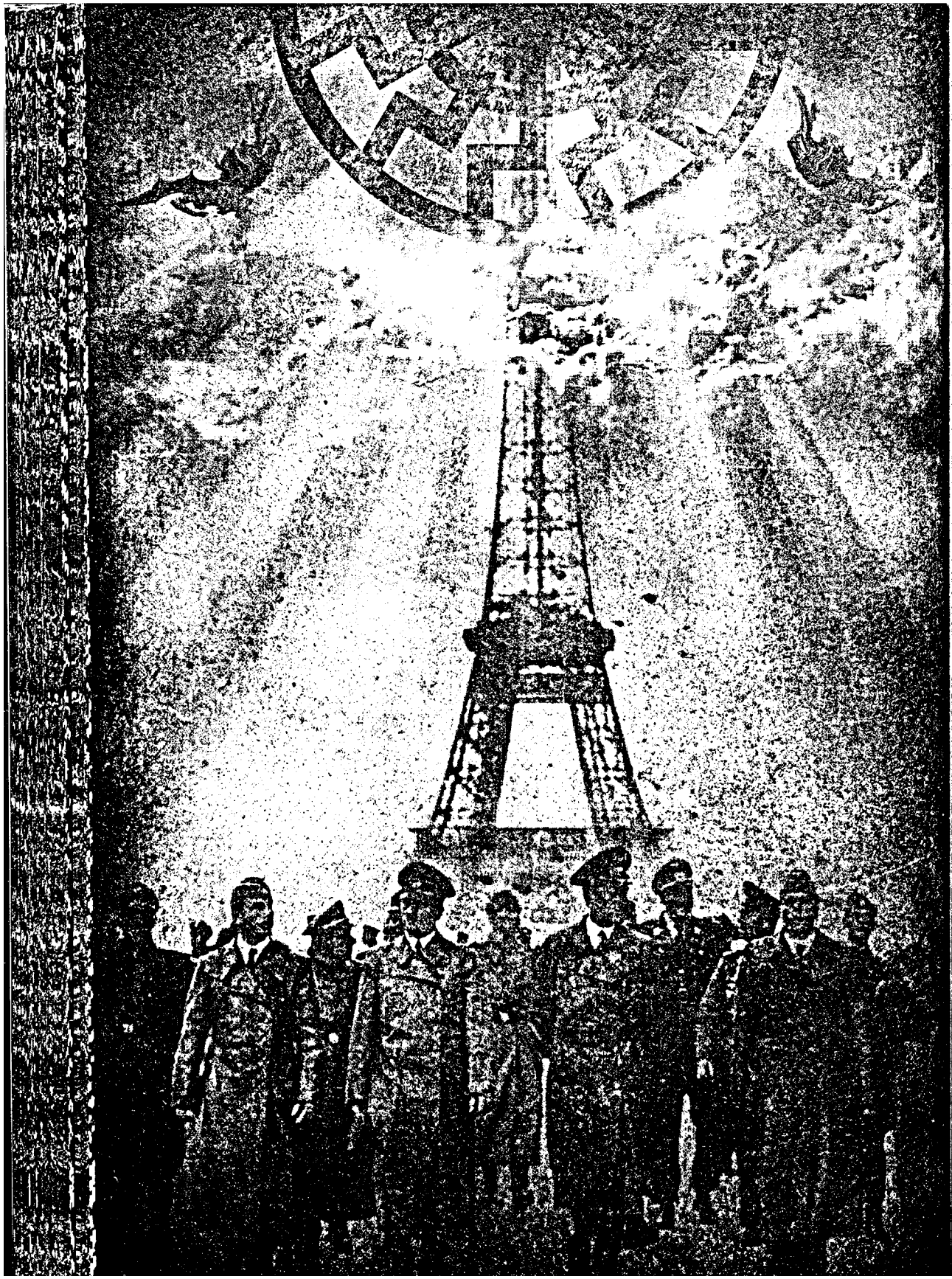
Over the last decade there have also been several essays that, while dealing with black metal as a whole, have dedicated a section to the NSBM phenomenon. The main example is the aforementioned *Lords of Chaos* by Moynihan/Søderlind, originally released in the spring of 1998; although in all its nearly four hundred pages the acronym NSBM never shows up, the relevance of this movement within the dissertation is rather obvious and far from negligible<sup>6</sup>. Much more compelling and focused on the relationship between black metal and contemporary neo-Nazi movements is the book *Unheilige Allianzen*, released in 2005 for a publishing house linked to the German radical Left, which offers a rather discontinuous cross section - but nonetheless effective - of a music scene that is highly exposed to political currents of the extreme Right and the like. Unfortunately, sometimes the analysis seems a bit too sloppy, and it tends to indiscriminately gather together bands, people, labels and events in a single big cauldron where anyone who does not explicitly demonstrate the opposite, may be automatically accused of racism, Nazism, sexism, anti-Semitism and so on<sup>7</sup>.

To conclude this overview on printed paper, in the summer of 2012, the London-based publishing house Black Front Press, managed by the anarco-nationalist Troy Southgate, published the book *Black Metal - European Roots and Musical Extremities*. The

tome, which is presented as a heterogeneous collection of writings focused on black metal (aided by the presence of some historical names such as Tony Dolan and Jeff Mantas of Venom), does not forget the everlasting and controversial relationship between music and political activities and proves to be quite interesting, if only because of the substantial contribution of some well-known characters of the NSBM scene: between the pages of this anthology there are writings by members belonging to projects like Ælfruna and Der Stürmer, but also Alex Kurtagić of the British extreme metal label Supernal Music, and Hendrik Möbus<sup>8</sup>.

## Notes:

- 1 - Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803 - 1873).
- 2 - *Nazi Black Metal*, from Decibel n.19, May 2006.
- 3 - *Der rechte Rand im Black Metal*, from Rock Hard n.241, June 2007.
- 4 - *Supremacy Through Intolerance?*, from Zero Tolerance n.38, November/December 2010.
- 5 - *National Socialist Black Metal - Il Sole Nero*, from Inferno Rock n.4, April/May 2012. Previously, the magazine also dedicated some space to the Norwegian NSBM project Disiplin.
- 6 - M. Moynihan and D. Søderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003. The book came out when the echo of the first wave of black metal on a large scale made the news for its strong satanic connotations. At the time, NSBM was still in a consolidation phase, but in spite of this, *Lords of Chaos* mentions bands like Graveland, Absurd and Kristallnacht, to name a few.
- 7 - C. Dornbusch and H. P. Killguss, *Unheilige Allianzen - Black Metal zwischen Satanismus, Heidentum und Neonazismus*, Unrast, Hamburg/Münster 2005.
- 8 - AAVV, *Black Metal - European Roots and Musical Extremities*, Black Front Press, London 2012.





# Dernier Bastion Blanc

## White resistance on the Maginot Line

*«EVERYTHING INTERESTING TAKES PLACE IN THE DARK; THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. WE KNOW NOTHING OF THE TRUE STORY OF THE MEN»<sup>1</sup>*

[LOUIS-FERDINAND CÉLINE]

**W**hen analyzing the European extreme music scene, we cannot avoid taking a look at what happened in France in the recent past. The transalpine black metal scene presents a constant turmoil of projects that draw on very diverse sounds, demonstrated by the avantgarde vein that has characterized the work of bands such as Blut Aus Nord, Deathspell Omega and Peste Noire in recent years. Calling the shots in the early Nineties, there is only the unassailable word of pure black metal, and a small congregation that goes by the name of Les Légions Noires (aka LLN) safeguards it. Created in response to what was happening in Norway, although it will inherit obvious stylistic influences from that scene, this small and self-sufficient enclave that began near Brest, in Brittany, became the architect of a large number of releases, all governed by the strictest laws of the underground. In many cases, they were demos with a laughable print run that often failed to reach a wider audience than a narrow circle of affiliates. Among the many bands belonging to the LLN, many of whom were born of incestuous collaborative processes initiated by a small handful of musicians who gave life to various entities and their side-projects: Mütiilation, Belketre, Torgeist and Vlad Tepes are some of the names that have survived the oblivion of time, now that the "black legions" are dissolved. They were then handed over to popular myth, as they embody the essence of a more hostile and anti-social black metal in a paradigmatic way, completely reluctant toward any business logic.

Despite the obvious basic extremism, the exponents of the LLN kept well away from NS subjects, with one exception: Meyhnach, founder of Mütiilation (and now the equally controversial Hell Militia, already under the watchful eye of the anti-Fascist organizations), who lent his harsh vocals to the notorious Gestapo 666. With a name that says it all and distasteful artwork, it would be reasonable to expect the most vulgar black metal massacre devoted to Hitler and blind propaganda. In truth, Gestapo 666, formed in the early 2000, are one of the greatest examples of that Nazi-satanic union created precisely in order to mix two of the things that society fears the most. If we want to call it NSBM, it should be noted that the direction is diametrically opposed to bands like Wolfnacht,

who have deliberately chosen to cut off the satanic roots and embrace National Socialism as a political/philosophical/aesthetic doctrine. The albums by the French band, however, do not contain any hint of serious propaganda, but are only a compendium of sulphurous violence and depravity in which Nazism is a multiplier. Their recordings offer handfuls of brutality distributed via good quality black metal (which, especially in the early releases, reflects the legacy of the LLN, with a nod toward Darkthrone and Burzum), never chaotic and serving as a harbinger of gloomy atmospheric passages underlined by thin keyboards, where the devil embodies both the great corrupter and the Führer of the



*Funeral's logo*

infernal hordes. Titles like *Gestapo of Satan*, *Black Gestapo Metal*, and *Shadow Hate Division* prove that the traditional satanic component is still relevant, and they are unwilling to step aside to make room for a coherent political vision of some sort.

The band Funeral is much less prone to being two-faced and can be viewed as the most important group for the establishment of the regime of terror which has shaken the foundations of southern France for some time. Founded in 1994 in Toulon, a small town overlooking the Mediterranean, the trio had a rather short life which resulted in a demo, *Black Flame of Unholy Hate*, and a split tape with Osculum Infame; this fleeting adventure indelibly marked the underground ecosystem beyond the Alps. In a 1995 interview given by the band's guitarist and composer, Hades, Funeral delivered a statement to posterity that was surprisingly ahead of its time and showed how things were converging towards a common goal without an organic structure yet:

*«Funeral plays black National Socialist metal. It's melodic black metal with NS lyrics»<sup>2</sup>.*

Wanting to make a clean break from all the speculations and mental superstructures that had been erected over the years, this definition provided by Hades remains a simple, clear and formally correct synthesis of the genre to this day (it should be noted that the acronym NSBM was officially born only four years later, with release of *The Night and the Fog* compilation). Influenced by the Scandinavian sound and the contemporary Polish scene, especially for its ideological extremism, the demo by the transalpine trio was the first work to emerge on French soil that was not afraid to blatantly expose the traits of a markedly National Socialist ideology. Funeral's vision is devoid of ambiguity, and of a decidedly different nature compared to the scenic needs of other less intransigent realities, referring to that primitive Nazi-satanic underground in vogue before the advent of the Internet. In the interview mentioned above, Hades seamlessly refers to different

organizations within and outside his country's borders, ranging from the Charlemagne Hammer Skins, to the Sinister Order of Fenrir and the Black Order<sup>3</sup>.

In perfect harmony with the call to arms that originated in Norway, the adhesion to black metal travels through the will to act and to support other people's criminal activities in France as well; asked about acts of vandalism against religious buildings, Hades takes the question onto a different track, showing the first signs of an anti-Christianity that is beginning to be perceived in a wider and worrisome context:

*«Personally I'm aware of the importance of such acts (I support particularly murders more than church burnings) but here people are too much blinded by Jewish anti-white propaganda, so with this shit they deny their Aryan way of life and holy mission (I mean the extermination of inferior races) because they don't want to be labeled as racists or nazis»<sup>4</sup>.*

Similarly, it is evident that the persistent satanic matrix is strictly inherent and balanced by the influence of Adolf Hitler, albeit in a perspective that is far from revisionist. His tyrannical reign of terror is praised, in which the weaker gives way to the stronger: a perspective that closely fits the philosophy of black metal. Hitler, seen as a fallen warrior and a great leader, as well as a subverter of the Christian order, begins to undermine the title of "great rebel" once firmly in the grasp of the lord of the underworld:

*«Adolf Hitler was the only person able to restore the Aryan pride and values in the heart of the white people and to rid Europe from the Jewish plague. He was the greatest man of the century and an impressive leader and genius. The ideology he created was uncompromising, intolerable and tyrannical. It was the reign of the superior ones, the triumph of the Aryan principles»<sup>5</sup>.*

If ideologically speaking Funeral may be considered among those who led the way down a road that would soon be packed with followers, other matters of a more material nature aroused the interest of the authorities. On the night of June 8 1996, singer Xaphan (Anthony Mignoni) and guitarist Black Christ (Christophe Magnoni, who in the meantime had formed Blessed in Sin), in the company of two girls, broke into the cemetery of their small town, exhumed the body of Yvonne Foin and disfigured the corpse, planting a cross in its heart. The investigation quickly led to the identification of the culprits and the newspaper L'Express ran the story for a few issues, riding the wave of popular indignation and morbid fascination with events that lend themselves well to a tabloid treatment: first, the attention was focused on the supposedly satanic nature of the macabre ritual, only to adjust the aim and come back at the topic with alarming concern because of the connections with neo-Nazi circles, which emerged from further investigations. In Anthony Mignoni's house some flyers and pamphlets with blasphemous content were recovered, such as the famous flyer showing Christ's face with the caption: *«Wanted for crimes against humanity: Jesus (also known as Christ). He is accused of having initiated the persecution and murder of millions of people...»<sup>6</sup>*. The flyer appeared on a



**ON RECHERCHE  
POUR CRIME  
CONTRE L'  
HUMANITE**



**JESUS (dit le Christ)**

**Il est accusé d'être l'  
initiateur de persécutions et  
de meurtres de millions de  
personnes**

**Il est le fondateur du  
christianisme, une religion de  
fanatiques qui promet la vie  
éternelle mais a comme  
finalité l'esclavage.**

**ATTENTION**

**Les partisans de Jésus (dit le  
Christ) ont pris le contrôle de  
dizaines de nations et de  
millions d'esprits.  
Ils sont armés et dangereux,  
à la fois politiquement et  
idéologiquement.**

**NAPALM ROCK N°4**

famous magazine linked to the extreme Right called Napalm Rock - which had already begun to show interest in black metal bands with radical ideas and was in turn, connected to the Nouvelle Resistance movement founded by Christian Bouchet<sup>7</sup>. The article published in L'Express also mentioned some para-Nazi statements given to the French fanzine Deo Occidi, and a mysterious "Sacred Order of the Emerald" that the band may be part of - according to the article, nothing more than a facade organization whose address corresponds to the residence of Christophe Magnoni's parents.

A few months after the start of the investigations, a new piece titled «*Neo-Nazi defilers: new evidence*» appeared in L'Express. The paper went back to the subject because of new developments: flyers, documents and publications related to the "Holy Order of the Emerald", the neo-Nazi circle of the Charlemagne Hammer Skins and the French Nationalist Party were recovered in the peninsula of Saint Madrier, poorly hidden in a bag under a pile of stones. According to police, it was Christophe's brother, David Magnoni (aka Metatheos, also a member of Blessed in Sin), who hid the material when things had taken a bad turn and his brother had become a target of the investigators. In December 1996, there were more imprisonments as a result of these findings. A prominent element of the CHS, Metatheos himself, and Xaphan (who was on the loose awaiting trial) again ended up behind bars, all with multiple criminal charges: instigation to racial hatred, apology of crimes against humanity, threats, and yet another case of grave desecration. This series of circumstances marked the end of Funeral.

During his stay in prison, Xaphan laid the foundations for a new project, using his time to study the name, logo and concept. Once the period of detention was over, Seigneur Voland, were born; the name was in use back in the Middle Ages in the territories of northern France to identify Satan. For

the occasion, Xaphan recruited his old bandmate L.F., thus rebuilding the core duo of Funeral; as a matter of fact, musically speaking the similarities are obvious, while there are some apparent differences from a thematic point of view. Funeral's ideological ferocity is only partially blurred by the introduction of a new main theme: the death of God, as announced by Nietzsche in some of his works (particularly *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*), which inspired a satanic vision of the world, where the term "satanic" seems to resume its original meaning of "adversary"<sup>9</sup>. This concept is central to the philosophy promoted by Xaphan, a self-proclaimed atheist who does not indulge in any kind of spiritualism; following the biblical interpretation, he chooses Satan as a form of opposition to God and his people, the people of Israel. His stay in the nation's prisons did not soften certain uncompromising positions, so it was inevitable that the anti-Semitism previously expressed by Funeral would also find a way to surface in Seigneur Voland:



Xaphan of Funeral / Seigneur Voland

*«In Seigneur Voland, the topics are the same – my way to talk about the glorious past, anti-Semitism, revisionism and war against ZOG is more vivid and symbolic. [...] enrolling is not my goal, music is not my goal either [...] I totally agree with anti-democracy, laws on blood, racial and ethical purges, extermination of human wastes; I admire Adolf Hitler's will to found a neo-pagan empire in Europe. If you consider these topics as "politic", so Seigneur Voland is a political association of spirits and art»<sup>10</sup>.*

Particularly pragmatic and far from esoteric tangents, Xaphan does not attribute messianic and supernatural qualities to Hitler but rather identifies him as a man of action, as well as a modern Antichrist because of his opposition to Christianity and, more generally, to the three so-called religions of the desert. Nazism and Satanism are therefore seen as sides of the same coin, and as essential and complementary tools to deal with the Christian dogma, with the aim of eradicating both its cult and the bloodline that generated it, in its entirety.

While expressly becoming the bearer of blatantly anti-Semitic ideologies, and despite the embryonic connections previously highlighted between the extreme Right and the transalpine NSBM scene (which, in truth, never found a concrete embodiment, as happened in Eastern Europe), Xaphan seems to want to maintain some sort of aristocratic detachment from the skinhead fringes:



*Xaphan performing live with Seigneur Voland*

*«Do not confound me with hooligans or skinheads drinking beer all day long, for me, these people are like punks, hippies or junkies: useless»<sup>11</sup>.*

Getting back to the subject of music, the band released two great split albums with Chemin de Haine, *Cérémonie Chaotique Pour Un Monde Mourant - Act I* and *Act II* and a self-titled EP that, among other things, picked some lyrical elements that are relevant to NSBM in the songs

*Sur Le Ruines Et Les Cendres De Sion* and *Dernier Bastion Blanc* ("Have I dreamed of the twelve tribes exterminated / by the last white bastion of the Third German Reich...")<sup>12</sup>. These activities continued until 2002 (apart from a few impromptu concerts in the following years), when the project was declared over. Xaphan himself explained how, having dealt with the initial concept in its entirety, the band had reached the end of its natural life cycle.

Meanwhile, Funeral's other former members did not remain idle in the scene, and while the band Blessed in Sin, formed by the Magnoni brothers, kept its black metal shielded from explicit political stances after the initial raids in ambiguous territories, L.F. set in motion what would prove to be the deadliest NSBM machine hailing from the lands beyond the Alps: Kristallnacht, whose moniker alone evokes ghosts, in reference to the tragic Nazi pogrom that occurred during the night between November 9-10, 1938, when under the authorities' indifference, an unstoppable wave of violence against Jewish people and their possessions broke out in the territories of Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia. A moniker in which we do not find any cross-references to mystical or esoteric theories about secret buried knowledge, nor mention of Jungian archetypes, but are only left with a concrete historical reference that exemplifies how the band embraces Nazism as a manifestation of pragmatic force that is capable of removing all traces of Judeo-Christian influence.

The decision to change names is not a prelude to any stylistic variation, indeed L.F. himself will explain in an interview with the Polish fanzine *Into the Pentagon*, how the musical direction is perfectly contiguous to what was achieved with Funeral; what demanded this change was the need to assert the beliefs of the band even more strongly<sup>13</sup>. In the same interview, however, a definite concern about recent events arose: namely that the previous months' news reports had put the band's activities, in particular those related to Nazi propaganda, under the constant watchful eye of the police, who definitely did not take what happened lightly. Heedless of this, L.F. did not withdraw from his stance, showing how Funeral's ideological legacy had only changed its form:

«We have to destabilize the actual Jewish tyranny by any means possible. I can't tell when the time of NS rebirth will come, but what can keep us dedicated must be the pursuit of idealism. We can't let our convictions, identity and race die because of Jewish repression»<sup>14</sup>.

Similarly, Kristallnacht's musical path does not give way to any ambiguity whatsoever, beginning with the 1997 split album with German band Morke, which displays a white Totenkopf on black background. The first act of the new course is titled *Reigning with Honour & Tyranny*, and it is a tangible example of the new musical direction: a rapid pace, melodic and enveloping guitars with a carpet of scattered keyboards, a vaguely symphonic touch, and fierce and ungraceful screaming. There are two versions of this tape out there, one which contains two covers in addition to the two original songs, with Kristallnacht engaging in *Lost Wisdom* by Burzum and Morke giving a curious black/RAC reinterpretation - likely with provocative intent - of *God of Thunder* by Kiss.



Kristallnacht

The following year, L.F. visited the nation's prisons too: accused of Nazi propaganda and collaboration with the aforementioned Charlemagne Hammer Skins, he was imprisoned for three months and then released (the trial would take place later in 2004 and result in fines and suspended sentences). Treated as a mere bump in the road, Kristallnacht struck an alliance with Germany's Darker Than Black to publish a mini CD and record a song for the fundamental compilation *The Night and the Fog* - as often repeated, a manifesto of NSBM, that places Kristallnacht as one of its founding fathers. The ups and downs were not over however, and they seemed to haunt the band across the border: as we have seen in the chapter about Germany, Darker Than Black was accused of promoting neo-Nazi material in October 1999, and was subjected to a raid by police in which much of its catalog was seized. Among the material that was seized, were several copies of the mini CD *Warspirit*, which would lead to a very small distribution compared to the expected initial print run of 500 copies.

The next demo, *Soldiers of Triumphant Sun*, shows a strict thematic coherence coupled with a strengthening of the sound, leaving the keyboards behind to acquire greater brutality - and to differentiate themselves from Seigneur Voland's style, as L.F. was now in their line-up and was inevitably influencing them. It is with them and their associates, Blessed in Sin, that a particularly important split album takes shape, titled *Gathered Under the Banner of Concilium*. This release serves as a sort of testament, in which three of the most controversial entities of the French scene converge under one banner, baptizing this brotherhood Concilium (whose symbol will later be used



Conclium's logo

know, my understanding of NS included personal elements already and I always saw NS as beyond regular policy but rather as an elitist philosophy and a personal guideline, above all. However, the political side and connection of NS can't be totally ignored (I mean we can't say it's purely "apolitical") and it's the kind of matter I don't want to be associated with nor do I want to express this aspect of this ideology because to work for the "well-fare" of this degenerated white race is not my priority at all. I don't feel myself as a NS militant being involved in a specific movement or having political considerations. It seems many people misunderstood my motivation through my art, calling Kristallnacht a political band while my lyrics were dealing with War, antisemitism, bloodcult, longing for ubermensch... »<sup>15</sup>.

There is even a rather critical consideration of the already consolidated NSBM scene and its internal dynamics, now projected towards a unilateral political dimension, and thus losing sight of the big picture and the original spirit of black metal:

«My disgust for the NS black metal trend which is getting pathetic and boring and I don't want to support or to be linked to this circus nor I feel the need because, when I started my activities back in July 1994, there was no NS black metal scene at all so, I can live without it!!! I always saw Kristallnacht as a part of the extreme black metal Underground, being NS

by other related groups, such as Finis Gloria Dei, Xaphan's most recent project). Yet another EP titled *Adversary*, and some live dates that receive an excellent response seem to show a healthy band. Instead, with a press release, L.F. announces that Kristallnacht will cease all activities:

«My ideological situation has evolved: I still have respect for the NS Weltanschauung which is still a source of inspiration for me but I decided to walk my own path now more than ever. I realized that I must strengthen my individual convictions rather than limit myself or depend on an ideology created by someone else. As you probably



The cover of the compilation  
Creation Through Destruction / Adversary (2004)



*or not. [...] To be NS doesn't make a band more "true" than a satanic one. I hate such kind of behavior which is a proof of stupidity and ignorance as Satanism is the essence of black metal. NS can be associated to black metal (I will not say the opposite myself!) but to denigrate bands which don't expose NS ideas in their music, interviews... or don't show a strong interest in NS means nothing. [...] the so called "die hard" NS followers, they should rather join a political movement or listen to/play in a white power band instead of "perverting" the black metal spirit and cult (which they don't understand obviously) by trying to make it NS music exclusively»<sup>16</sup>.*

In closing, L.F. does not spare a preemptive jab to anyone who wants to read between the lines in an attempt to deny everything he had believed in up until then:

*«If after reading this statement you think I have radically changed my views, you are totally wrong!!!!!!»<sup>17</sup>.*

Some key aspects emerge from this statement, which must better analyzed in order to trace the French scene and understand why it seems to be unique in Europe. The perspective from which L.F. addresses the issues related to NS is far removed from those who make it a weapon to redeem the white race. In addition, the whole "social" aspect of Nazism is left aside. Even more important is the passage which shows that Satanism is the real core of black metal, and how National Socialism could be associated with it, but not replace it. A thought that is entirely relevant to the French scene, where there have been close collaborations between bands of distinctly Satanic philosophy and others of Nazi ideology, a demonstration of how NS-related topics were an integral component of many of the oldest strictly black metal projects, which were not considered part of a separate music circle.



*L.F. of Kristallnacht*



A collage of pictures and articles printed in the booklet of the retrospective CD  
Blooddrenched Memorial 1994-2002 which contains every release by Kristallnacht

The end of Kristallnacht's long battle against the system, however, was postponed to 2003, when the band temporarily rose from its own ashes to invade the German lands for an exceptional evening with Absurd, Magog and Totenburg. The venue was changed at the last minute to try and avoid police intervention, as they were determined to jeopardize the evening; however, despite all the precautions, the authorities found the new location and managed to prevent the headliners, Absurd, from going on stage. After this last troubled concert, Kristallnacht ceased their activities for good.



The French music scene had now lost its most uncompromising offspring, and the baton of the politically incorrect was passed on to the Parisian group Sombre Chemin ("Dark Path"). Their name was inspired by the Theodor Kittelsen painting, which appears on the cover of *Heis Lyset Tar Oss* by Burzum, simply depicting a tortuous and obscure path<sup>18</sup>. Vikernes' influence, both as a composer and thinker, is quite tangible in the work of the Parisian band. Characterized by themes related to pagan revival and the cult of blood, Sombre Chemin were among the most active and explicit acts in the transalpine lands, starting with an affiliation with the Pagan Front, which endorses certain views on modern society, and some clear statements which appeared on their website:

*"Sombre Chemin is an entity dedicated to the memory of our ancestors and the cult of the blood, to the fight against the present system and return to paganism in our European lands. We do not support the old, decadent "nationalism" which has only benefited the enemies of the hyper-boreans, constantly pushing us to kill each other. Our vision is that of the native lands within a Europe free from the influences of the desert"<sup>19</sup>.*

The band is detached from the sort of Hitler fanaticism brought into play by Funeral, and embraces a more esoteric and philosophical vision, leaving aside the practical applications of certain choices: the band defines itself as meta-political, having made a conscious decision to only use art as a propaganda tool for the dissemination of specific ideas. In this respect, black metal appeared as the obvious choice, because of the ideological background which, as we have seen, shows contiguity with the genre<sup>20</sup>. However, the background they refer to is similar to the National Socialist one: in fact the band includes not only the inevitable Julius Evola and Savitri Devi among its influences, but also people like Robert Dun (writer and promulgator of a return to paganism and an advocate of European nationalism perfectly in line with the views expressed by VilwolfHeim just a few lines above) and Léon Degrelle<sup>21</sup>.



*Léon Degrelle, Belgian politician,  
later a volunteer in the Waffen-SS*

The latter influence is actually bizarre, as his stance retraces that of Corneliu Codreanu: it is hard to imagine that a character who has always been strenuously devoted to Christianity has become a reference point for modern NSBM bands<sup>22</sup>. But we already had evidence of how often certain inconsistencies are left aside in favor of a revised and adapted interpretation of facts and ideas.

More generally, supporting the idea of a European nationalism as expressed by Robert Dun introduces a fundamental concept within a certain NSBM fringe, and is an idea that will spread among many Eastern bands. According to this perspective, nationalism is an element of decay, a destructive force introduced by Christianity and following the strategy of "divide and conquer", whose only real development has been to push the European nations to fight each other on the basis of differences that do not actually exist, given their common Indo-European roots. The only hope of survival for the white peoples of Europe would be to reject Christianity, a semitic and foreign cult, and embrace paganism - seen as the only true natural religion for man - recovering the cult of blood before humanity becomes a blur with no identity, bent by a capitalist society and uncontrolled immigration. According to VilwolfHeim, what happened on the outskirts of Paris in 2005, with the violent revolts of the French *banlieue*, is just a prelude to the great race war, the result of a forced cohabitation and the myth of integration between incompatible cultures<sup>23</sup>.

In eleven years of activity, Sombre Chemin's output has consisted of numerous split albums and demos of various kind, all imbued with ideological claims ranging from Satanism to paganism, based on melodic black metal that is bare and basic, recorded harshly and with a feeling of despair that can be likened to Burzum's early work. *Mémoire Païenne* and *Nacht und Krieg* are graceless works, but still representative, while the three full-length albums, before they split-up, are more accomplished from an artistic standpoint: *Doctrine*, the atmospheric *Notre Héritage Ancestral* and the last legacy on record, *Hétérodoxie: Opus III (Involution)* (the third chapter of a short concept that started with the two previous EPs, *Hétérodoxie: Opus I (Haine)* and *Hétérodoxie: Opus II (Fierté)* which is part of the split album with Eole Noir). Among the numerous releases worth mentioning, there is the collaboration with fellow compatriots Ornaments of Sin titled *Durch und Ruinen Düstere Kriegsfelder*, a work that fits in the classic NSBM vein, starting with its fundamental theme:



«*Durch Ruinen... is a concept on World War II, and it is a continuation of the tape Nacht und Krieg. They are basically songs based on the feelings and thoughts of this historical period. Regarding the Third Reich, Hitler was pagan, just like Hess or Himmler, for example. Obviously, there have been a few compromises with the Catholic Church, but the foundations and the ambitions of the movement have remained pagan. It is undeniable that some BM bands use the imagery of the Third Reich, and they are mostly fascinated by its destructive aspect. But the majority of NSBM bands refer to the*

*Third Reich just like they could refer to ancient Greece or the pre-Christian Indo-European tribes. As a matter of fact, it is a historical period that is employed to show the will to power of the European peoples, and their bond, as proven by the Waffen SS which, shall I remind you, were a European army made of Europeans of various nationalities, from the East as well as the West, the North and the South (contrary to the pseudo-cohesion of the present day European Union)*»<sup>24</sup>.

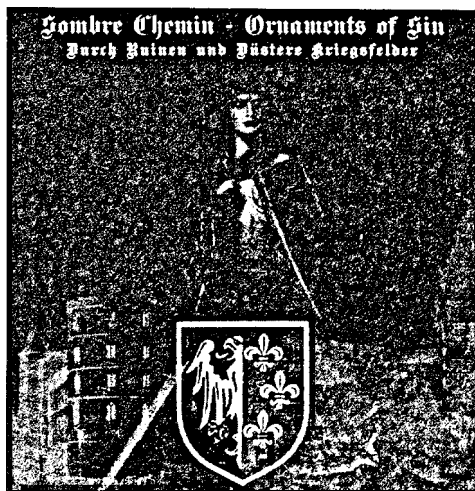
Though not with the same boldness as the Parisian group, Ornaments of Sin are among the few bands left in that dark area where black metal and politics get dangerously close. Active since 2001, they have released an EP with the unequivocal title *Inhale Zyklon-B* via Total Holocaust Records and two split albums (one with Sombre

Chemin, and one with Ad Hominem). Musically, they are not the most original, especially when compared to the other French bands mentioned so far, and they adhere very closely to the dictates of the Norwegian masters, Darkthrone. The only peculiarity of the combo is to be found in the lyrics, sometimes in French and sometimes in German, written by their singer Wolfnacht, who has German origins. In interviews, he never fails to analyze the situation in France in relation to the revival and expansion of Nazi ideas:

*«It is clear that the evolution of this ideology is due to the social and political mess that infects our country. It is understandable that people move towards a nationalist and identity recognising ideology [...] I still think that far right parties don't support NSBM movements,*



*Wolfnacht of Ornaments of Sin*



*The split Sombre Chemin/Ornaments of Sin with the logo of the Charlemagne Division (Waffen-SS) in the the foreground*

*they regard us as if we were inner cities delinquents. The world BM elite could be much stronger, but if there are causes for conflicts among us, we are lost. We must be united, all men are not equal but we are equal to each other inside the elite, fight together and make our intellectual and spiritual strength come true to have the purity of our blood be triumphant»<sup>25</sup>.*

Therefore, the NSBM movement is isolated and not considered as a reliable reserve of potential voters/activists by the institutional extreme Right. An interesting observation, which elsewhere reflects on the convergence of the skinhead and black metal scenes: a difficult communion according to Wolfnacht, who defines RAC as simple noise in order to convey a message<sup>26</sup>.

Despite some shy and unrealistic (as well as paradoxical, considering their statements in interviews) attempts to distance themselves from politics, Ornaments of Sin can still be counted

among the leaders of National Socialist Black Metal. On the other hand, Wolfnacht's statements on the invasion of "Untermenschen" which Europe is subjected to, his support of David Lane's "14 Words" and gory remarks such as «kill the people from the Orient and gas the traitors inside the scene...»<sup>27</sup> do not help to dispel doubts concerning the band's ill-suited sympathies, indeed quite the opposite. Instead, it is the very concept of NSBM that is questioned by the band, with an historically correct observation that brings us back to the fact that ideology and black metal have been traveling companions from the very beginning:

*«In my opinion BM has always been an extremist and elitist movement! Just look back at the time of the BM Mafia or the Inner Circle in Norway... I mean that NSBM is not new, before we just said black metal but nowadays bands are almost bound to call themselves NS not to be mistaken for this shitty pseudo black metal scene!»<sup>28</sup>.*

Definitely more popular than the aforementioned compatriots - but also dwelling on the border between acceptable and unacceptable - are Ad Hominem, one of the most prominent bands of the transalpine contemporary scene, partially because of the excellent productions released by the band's leader, Kaiser Wodhanaz. His technical qualities and compositional skills are objectively better than average, and his records boast passages that certainly do not label him as the latest Darkthrone clone. The artistic value of the project has



often taken a back seat however, overwhelmed by the whirlwind of controversy that arose following the release of the first work, *Planet ZOG - The End* (2002). On this record, everything comes together to bring Ad Hominem into the hellish circle of National Socialist black metal: from the reference to the Zionist Occupation Government in the title, to the thin and monochrome graphic showing a reversed Algiz rune (thus meaning the "rune of death", as used in Nazi

Germany) wrapped in barbed wire. Not to mention the anything but delicate musical content: consider songs like *Planet ZOG*, or *The Psalmody of Sub-Humans*, which opens with the sampling of a muezzin singing «Allab Akbar» until a voice growls «No more», and a gunshot kicks off the song. Then there is the virulent attack of *Auschwitz Rules*

(which caused the album to be banned in Germany), one of the songs that has actually marked the band's music as NSBM:

*«The proof of your decay, Auschwitz didn't go away  
You will know the agony of your carnal hypocrisy  
Burn in the flames of hatred, be forgotten in the sphere of silence  
Forever now you will be nothing but an empty page of history*

*Auschwitz rules over the torah  
Auschwitz rules over the koran  
Auschwitz rules over the bible  
Auschwitz rules over you bastards»*

Although the eye is obviously bound to fall on the word "Auschwitz", the lyrics stress a ferocity that Ad Hominem equally dispenses to all monotheistic religions, by virtue of the characteristic destructive misanthropy of black metal that here, however, is tinged with the controversial and black shadows of the recent past. Are Ad Hominem the current standard-bearers of modern French NSBM? The use and abuse of certain aesthetics and the split albums with the likes of Geimhre and Ornaments of Sin would suggest so, but a lot depends - as we have seen - on the interpretation that is given to this acronym:

*«My opinion is that I never talked about "National Socialism as the saviour of the white Aryan race" so Ad Hominem can't be seen as NSBM. It's much more than this and there's a negative dimension that NS bands don't deal with»<sup>29</sup>.*



Such a stringent conception of NSBM brings us back to that long-standing problem of perception that makes this subgenre elusive and difficult to categorize. If Wodhanaz's claims are formally impeccable, it must be taken into account that for years there has been an arbitrary use of the term NSBM, which now implies a group of philosophies and radical ideas much broader than the simple political doctrine of National Socialism.

In this case, in order to better understand the subtleties that lie behind the definition "Totalitarian Black Metal" adopted by Ad Hominem, it is interesting to read the brief but thorough study titled *Totalitarian Black Metal - An Approach Towards*

the *Concept of a Dominant Spiritual Race* written by Nils Wegner and published in the book *Black Metal - European Roots and Musical Extremities*<sup>30</sup>. Tracing the band's discography, the author dwells on some clues that appear on the albums that followed *Planet ZOG - The End* and are the landmarks of an elitist and individualistic philosophy, revolving around the concept of "Dominant Spiritual Race". The first, occult signs can be found in the controversial second album, *A New Race for a New World*: on the cover it is possible to read :D/S/R:, which indeed stands for "Dominant Spiritual Race", shown in semi-transparence under the logo as if it were written on the tank that emerges from the background. The album immediately faced censorship problems. In fact, the title is not written on the cover in full but only as ...*for a New World*, and the song *Slaughther the Pope* is also censored, appearing on the tracklist as *S. the Pope*. Wegner focuses on the lyrics of *Will to Power*, which invoke the advent of a new race that shall dominate on the ruins of the world and whose reference to "blood" and "race" - «*I'll never forget those who betrayed me / My blood, my race*» - should be read in terms of identity rather than racism. According to Wegner (and considering the statement on Ad Hominem's official website, in which the band say they have no interest in political issues but they stand against every monotheism or dogma responsible for the enslavement of mankind<sup>31</sup>), these are the elements that define the philosophy of the band, which is influenced by Nietzsche, some aspects of Ragnar Redbeard's social Darwinism, and in general, seems to align itself with the theories of Baron Julius Evola.

Philological examinations aside, the sound quality of the album is indisputable: Ad



Hominem's pounding black metal, veiled by a modern aura, earns the band a respectable position within the extreme underground. But such a quick ascent to the headlines is counterbalanced by the inevitable problems that arise due to their ideas: despite Wodhanaz's vain attempts to explain that his philosophy has nothing to do with politics, the reputation of the band is inevitably overshadowed by





*The provocative cover of Purification (2003), split between Ad Hominem and Warfire*

the ghost of National Socialism. All this also has an impact on live activity, and Ad Hominem have been boycotted several times, finding themselves forced to use an assumed name in order to be able to perform without problems.

The third record, *Climax of Hatred*, and the following one, *Dictator - A Monument of Glory*, pursue the same path as the previous works and seem to carry on the same lyrical themes. The final track on *Climax of Hatred* is in fact titled: *D/S/R* and it is a hypothetical manifesto that sums up the band's radical thinking:

*«Human imperfection*

*False Pride*

*Massive mediocrity*

*Running to death*

*Never-ending faith*

*Praise tolerance and love*

*Glory of will for the betrayed ones*

*Turn pain into eternal beauty*

*Eradicate man's dreams*

*Replaced with a new empire*

*Ruled by a Dominant Spiritual Race»<sup>32</sup>*

The aforementioned analysis by Wegner helps us read between the lines, providing an interpretation of Ad Hominem's work that, although too liberal and biased, brings out details that help to fully understand the concept that unfolds through the band's albums, which outlines stages of decay, purification and rebirth that can be traced

back to alchemical doctrines. Although it is not the only one, National Socialism is certainly a major element in the musical path undertaken by the band; and even though Ad Hominem do not consider themselves in any way as part of the NSBM scene, it is no wonder they are insistently brought back to it because of the topics, the statements or the live shows with bands with a less than spotless curriculum (as for example Absurd).



Going through this long period of time that took us from Funeral to Ad Hominem, it is clear that France can definitely be regarded as one of the great European bastions of NSBM: if

not for the number of active bands (rather small, although the names we mentioned here could be complemented by less prominent ones such as Tank Genocide, BlackSSstorm, Herrlisheim Kommando, Order of the Death's Head or Brutal Begude), certainly for the impact it had on the scene, and also because of the echo roused by extra-musical events. The transalpine team has been able to synthesize and "harmonize" some aspects of the merger between radical ideology and black metal, in a somewhat less radical manner than its Polish counterpart. Unlike what happened in the Eastern territories, the majority of French projects have built their identity while always keeping Satanism at the center of their philosophical journey, from the rejection of the contemporary world to their contempt for humanity and its weaknesses. In this sense, it is not surprising that the use of Nazi themes is always done from a perspective that they consider as non-political, since they are not interested in a real application of any doctrine with social implications: National Socialism is taken in its most barbaric expressions (with little or no interest in the philosophical/esoteric components) as an example of social Darwinism, according to which the strongest prevails over the weak; or as a means of opposition to the Christian faith, which is seen not only as a harmful religion but also and primarily as a disintegrating agent of the European culture.





*The covers of the album by French combo Tank Genocide, Fascism Is Our Way and their split with 1389 from the Balkans, carrying the peremptory title Fuck You All, We Are NSBM!!!! (both released in 2012)*

Although the transalpine scene has since lost much of its relevance on the international chessboard of ideologized metal, we can still say that the most paradigmatic NSBM (the one that promotes the ultimate mixture between Satanism and National Socialism) was rarely expressed so effectively as it was in France.

## Notes:

- 1 - L. F. Céline, *Journey to the End of the Night*.
- 2 - Funeral, from Hatemonger n.1, 1995.
- 3 - Ibid.
- 4 - Ibid.
- 5 - Ibid.
- 6 - L'Express, *Les profanateurs sont d'extrême droite*, July 1996.

## DERNIER BASTION BLANC

7 - French journalist and politician active on several fronts, he recently raised the idea of an alliance between nationalist groups and Islam. A proposal that certainly was not welcomed with enthusiasm by the advocates of the transalpine NSBM, who are among the strongest supporters of an anti-Islam campaign in Europe.

8 - L'Express, *Profanateurs néonazis: nouvelles preuves*, November 1996.

9 - From Seigneur Voland's biography published on Strength Through War n.4, 2003.

10 - Seigneur Voland, 666 n.2, 1999/2000.

11 - Ibid.

12 - Excerpt from the song by Seigneur Voland *Dernier Bastion Blanc*.

13 - Kristallnacht, from Into the Pentagram n.5, 1996/1997.

14 - Ibid.

15 - Kristallnacht, press release, September 2002.

16 - Ibid.

17 - Ibid.

18 - Sombre Chemin, from Les Acteurs de l'Ombre (<http://lesacteursdelombre.net>), December 2005.

19 - From Sombre Chemin's biography on their official website ([www.sombre-chemin.cjb.net](http://www.sombre-chemin.cjb.net)).

20 - Sombre Chemin, from True Black Metal ([www.trueblackmetal.info](http://www.trueblackmetal.info)), September 2005.

21 - Leon Degrelle was a controversial Belgian politician, famous in his homeland first as an ultra-nationalist at the head of rexism - a movement of Catholic inspiration, anti-capitalist and anti-democratic - and then as a volunteer fighter in the ranks of the Walloon legion of the Waffen-SS. Once he achieved a certain notoriety (he became something of a poster boy for the regime's propaganda purposes) he also met senior leaders of the Reich and Hitler himself, on two occasions; according to a reconstruction made by Degrelle himself but never confirmed, the Führer admitted: «*If I had a son I would have liked him to be like you*». At the end of the war, exiled from his native land, he took refuge in Franco's Spain where he stayed until his death in 1994. Degrelle remains a very controversial character, not only for his political past, but also for the ongoing propaganda carried on in the post-war years. Singled out as unhinged and megalomaniac by some, and revered as a hero by others, until his death, he was a fervent denialist and an enthusiastic admirer of Hitler. In addition to collecting his memories as a soldier in several writings widely available in the extreme Right milieu, he has repeatedly given interviews in which he did not fail to encourage the younger generation to strive for the fallen ideal.

22 - Just think of an old statement by Hades of Funeral, which shows how the link between Nazism and Satanism, although there is historical evidence to the contrary, is seen as the only possible combination: «*Well I support all sorts of organizations which spread NS propaganda! Except stupid Christian people who pretend to be Nazi!!! It's just ridiculous! If you're Nazi you can't be Christian!*», from Hatemonger n.1, 1995.

23 - Sombre Chemin, from Les Acteurs de l'Ombre (<http://lesacteursdelombre.net>), December 2005.

24 - Ibid.

25 - Ornaments of Sin, from Northwinds n.1, December 2002.

26 - Ornaments of Sin, from Jentil Odol n.3, March 2003.

27 - Ibid.

28 - Ornaments of Sin, from Northwinds n.1, December 2002.

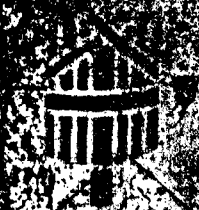
29 - Ad Hominem, from Paeans of Hate n.5, May 2010.

30 - AAVV, *Black Metal - European Roots and Musical Extremities*, Black-Front-Press, London 2012.

31 - Ad Hominem, from the band's official website ([www.death-to-all.com](http://www.death-to-all.com)).

32 - Excerpt from Ad Hominem's song : *D/S/R.*.

W IL LIVE



OPERA ■ LE BAND DA CONOSCERE E EVITARE ■

# Nazi metal, la faccia oscena del rock

traduzione del club e negli studi, manipolando le proprie immagini ideologiche e spacciando violenti miti e distorsioni del Reich e dell'Oberaustro. Centro le loro etichette si sono scagliate anche le organizzazioni ebraiche. Avviso ai promotori del rock neofascista: indovinate sempre o tenete su chi invitate

U... è geniale musicale... ato nel sangue, che predica... le idee di Hitler... Nsbm, l'at... black metal. Ela ve... e violentemente... dell'heavy metal. Le ori... anni '80, quando la band inglese Venom fu una delle

occultismo e delle saghe di Tolkien. Con il nome di Bur... una figura di culto... locale metal e venne... dalla polizia per alcuni... criminosi legati al Black... Ben presto iniziò a inter... come ortodossia i conte... la musica black metal... anche il nazismo... fare...

cantante Gaahl, che in passato ha militato in organizzazioni di ultra-destra e che nel 2002 è stato arrestato per aver torturato un pomo. Nel suo curriculum anche un'esibizione a Cracovia in cui portò sul palco diverse teste mozzate di pecora e un'in... bruciare

2004, altri... nome... antebracci... Thor's Hammer e Rob... Fudali, leader... Graveland... che si batte contro... d'estinzione della razza... Recita il testo dell'... Blood



# Intolleranza Italiana

## Between nostalgia and orthodoxy

*«ITALY IS TWO DIFFERENT THINGS FOR ME. IT IS THE ROMAN EMPIRE WITH ALL ITS LEGACIES, LIKE THE WORKS OF OVID, AND ITS BAD ASPECTS. TAKE JULIUS CAESAR, FOR EXAMPLE: ONE THAT WITH HIS ARMY HAS KILLED MORE THAN ONE MILLION ANCIENT EUROPEANS DURING THE GALLIC WARS. HAD HE DONE IT IN THE PRESENT DAY, HE WOULD HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONVICTED AS A HORRIBLE WAR CRIMINAL... AND THEN THERE'S THE ITALY THAT WE KNOW NOWADAYS WITH ITS CULTURE, ITS MAGNIFICENT LANDSCAPES AND MANY, MANY PROBLEMS STILL TO BE RESOLVED. MOST OF THEM CAUSED BY ITS ROLE OF DEFEATED COUNTRY AT THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. AH, IF ONLY THE ADMIRABLE AND GLORIOUS DUCE HAD BEEN VICTORIOUS...»<sup>1</sup>*

[VARG VIKERNES]

**W**e have seen how NSBM and its kindred have been able to take root, with multiple forms and peculiarities, at almost every conceivable latitude. Therefore, one would expect a particularly thriving and deeply rooted scene from Italy, historically the “home to all forms of Fascism”. One would expect a rich circle of prominent names that were recognized at an international level and be able to export (when not impose) a pattern of original black metal, perhaps Mussolini-inspired, but still of considerable weight within the NSBM community - or at least something along those lines.

However, the “Bel Paese” is nothing like this. There are few bands explicitly aligned to the National Socialist cause, and none of them are a stable part of established networks such as the Pagan Front. What stands before us is a sparse cluster of individual projects scattered here and there across the territory, from north to south, including the islands, without a significant trait d’union capable of putting together an organic or at least partially defined design.

In Italy, NSBM was not born spontaneously, but was an imported phenomenon. This makes the country very similar to other nations where this type of militant black metal did not manage to carve that place in the sun out for itself, that was instead granted to countries such as Greece, Poland and Eastern Europe in general. Focusing within the territory, the question is: why? What has been missing and what is still missing in Italy, compared to other places where this scene with illegal connotations has nevertheless been able to proliferate in such an alarming manner? In the past years there have been projects that were actually able to secure a small space at a national level, but only in very

recent times have some names started to emerge in earnest and earn a reputation in the international underground.

First of all, it must be said that Italian NSBM pays the same piper as the Italian black metal scene tout court: very few local bands have been able to gain an international reputation - not for lack of merit, truthfully - and as a matter of fact, the Italian peninsula is certainly not a renowned exporter of black-tinted talents. Narrowing our view to the Italian niche of National Socialist black metal, we also have to take into account a certain skepticism coming from across the border, due to purely ideological issues.



Jarl Von Hagall, of Der Stürmer

*«To be honest, I'm not that fond of Mussolini but I still recognize in him great deeds concerning the change of the contemporary Italian state as well as a natural born leader. I think Mussolini's stances and moves were critical for the loss of the war [...] Mussolini's state was not that much based on the values of blood but rather a loose reminiscence to that of the ancient Roman republic. He was more concerned about the state-structure rather than blood and race. He became somewhat "anti-Semitic" and racially conscious after Hitler's declarations against the Jews»<sup>2</sup>.*

This is the opinion of the lead singer of Der Stürmer, and we should add that his comrades in

the trenches of the NSBM scene were much less tender towards the peninsula. What emerges is a glaring fracture that wants to clearly distinguish Fascism from Nazism, leaving very little margin to the Duce and his followers. In NSBM, there is room for a single point of reference, one leader, one "god", who is also perceived as betrayed and



led to defeat because of the Italian people. A thesis that seems obvious when reading the statements of Athalwolf of the band Wolfnacht:

*«Adolf Hitler himself was a great adorer of my fatherland and our Hellenic history and culture and he is not responsible for attacking Hellas. I am pro-German but I have no good feeling for the Italians and their Fascistic regime of these years, if you can understand what I mean. If I had to accuse someone for the Germans' attack in my homeland that would be the Italians, they have a great responsibility for the loss of the war, too»<sup>3</sup>.*

Although a bit haphazardly, before the second millennia, the first signs of NSBM made in Italy emerge in fits, with tributes and productions of variable quality. We could mention certain - questionable - releases by the very Italian Third Reich Production, especially the second volume of the sampler *Blut und Eisen*, complete with the Italian national anthem and famous speeches by Mussolini used as intros and outros. We should also mention the tribute to the revered Varg Vikernes with the compilation *A Man, a Band, a Symbol - Underground Italian Tribute to Burzum*, released by the defunct Wotan's Reich Production.



Disorderly claims of Fascist thuggery take shape on less than memorable albums such as the compilation *Mortualia Nocturnum* by EXM93 (previously known in the Milan area with the moniker Mortuarium), who upon remembering the first actions of the original band describe their style in these terms:

*«The genre is a kind of non-technical but ruthless black metal, and because of the lyrics Mortuarium were identified in a satanic-Nazi current that would have its exploit only a few years later with the well-known bands from Northern Europe»<sup>4</sup>.*

The band itself takes due distance and underlines the distinctions regarding certain politics in music, in spite of the singer's greetings and thanks addressed to «God, my family, friends, dogs, the inventor of beer, the Duce and patriots», in the last lines of the official biography:

*«We take this opportunity to remind you that Satanism and Nazism are actually foreign to EXM93, whose ideological basis remains patriotism, source of every act of honor (the members who openly declare to be Fascist do so on their own initiative)»<sup>5</sup>.*



This does not mean that Italy lacks projects that are much more radical and militant, such as Propaganda (who have only made the MCD, *Corri alle Armi...*, released by the Mexican label Azermethod Records in 2008) and Gaszimmer.

The latter, produced by Algiz Art Productions, a label based in Abruzzo, pedantically trace almost every NSBM cliché, thus proving they have fully assimilated the lessons taught by the masters of the genre. If we exclude the demos and

various collaborative split albums, the band's only full-length, *Dominazione di Eternità* (2006), offers an optimal overview of the stylistic path they have undertaken: the CD embraces typical imagery from the foundation of "magical Nazism" without hesitation, from the fortress of Wewelsburg to the Totenkopf ring, as well as the runes and explicit references to the warrior élite.

*Dominazione di Eternità* also includes the band's first demo dating back to 1999 as a bonus, which proves to be much more "true" and closer to the NSBM cause than the invectives contained in the album's tracks. On the demo, there is no poetic license or ramblings of sorts, but only and exclusively violent propaganda in music, that is both direct and explicit. Music-wise it is lo-fi black metal, fierce and primitive, which is perfectly suited to songs like *Gaszimmer*, *Totenkopf Art*, *Holokaust Kamps 99* and *Zyklon B*, until the almost obligatory finale with the anthem of the Nazi Party.



Other names that, intentionally or not, fall within the same cauldron of Nazi inspiration, resist and exist on the edge of a concealed scene, buried in a most reclusive and localized underground. In some cases, only the monikers are remembered, while others continue their work knowing that they cannot aspire to print runs that exceed 500/1000 copies. In no particular order, we mention projects like Milit, Wolfskrieger, Jewish Juice, Kriegsverb, Totenkopf, Hate XXX and Corvus Invictus, to name a few.



Momentarily setting aside the strict (yet versatile) loyalty to the NSBM doctrine, and expanding the scope of our vision to other groups that gravitate around the same ideological/political orbit, there are bands that offer black metal that is somehow detached and deliberately more refined. The funereal and resolute ideology is replaced by a path of an almost aristocratic nature, dictated by the principles of the Western esoteric tradition. A key example of this attempt is offered by Movimento d'Avanguardia Ermetico, an ensemble based in Piedmont and created in the Fall of 2005 which, in its rare phonographic appearances, shows an inclination that combines an Evola-inspired imprint with stylistic choices geared towards extreme metal and enhanced with rather evocative melodic lines. The band's points of reference are clearly identified on their debut demo *Alle Frontiere dell'Anima* (2007), and also reiterated in



## MOVIMENTO D'AVANGUARDIA ERMETICO Corvus Invictus



works such as the split album with Corvus Invictus called *I Sentieri della Tradizione* and their other wide-ranging works: the albums *Stelle Senza Luce* (2010) and *Lacrime degli Dei* (2012).

«We would like to emphasize a certain distance from the concept of monotheism, which belongs to the Semitic religions and their militant proselytism and fanaticism: Christianity, Judaism and Islam are corruptions of the spirit of non-European origin, a psychopathology

of the desert that has conquered the Indo-European world by leveraging on degeneration. As for Satanism, we are talking about a very varied topic: there is in fact the Satanist speculation of direct Jewish and Kabbalist descent, but at the same time there are also forms of Satanism that are objectively very close to paganism, and in some cases they even overlap, and the same applies to esotericism in general. For example, for the past ten years I have had a strong fascination for everything that concerns the so-called "esoteric Nazism" both as a historical phenomenon (the Thule society, the Black Order, Externsteine and Wewelsburg) and as a vision of the world, therefore the writings of Miguel Serrano and Savitri Devi. It is therefore difficult to set clear limits in the esoteric world: for example, I know that some Satanist groups include aspects of Nazi esotericism, therefore pagan. To me they seem forced, but I do not feel like criticizing a path "from the outside"»<sup>6</sup>.

Certain areas of the most uncompromising black metal refer instead to the concept of "Archaeofuturism", a smart oxymoron that seems to trace the elusive shape of a supposed Conservative Revolution within sounds and themes (utilizing a unique blend of traditional themes interpreted in light of a contemporary vanguard). This is the case of the Black Metal Invitta Armata, a movement that involves bands like Spite Extreme Wing, Janus, Black Flame, Heims, Tronus Abyss, Frangar, Gladio, Hirpus and Galaverna<sup>7</sup>.

As we have witnessed several times, wherever the birth of a particular phenomenon wants to indelibly mark territory, it is necessary to release an anthology that will work as the host, and at the same time prove to be an effective manifesto, of its *Weltanschauung*. In accordance with this strategy, the compilation CD titled *Signum Martis* was released in 2007 supposedly the first piece in a communion of intents and worldviews, that collects a dozen Italian bands united by specific principles.



Ianuaria (2005), Hirpus' debut CD

«This Movement unites and represents the Italian bands that, proud of their legacy, will endeavor in a common Artistic effort aimed at celebrating their origins. Roman culture as the conceptual and lyrical core, and musical experimentation with extreme, martial and daring sounds as a soundscape»<sup>8</sup>.

The Black Metal Invitta Armata has proven to be a separate entity, and does not leave itself open to particular associations with the NSBM world. Wanting to look for a point of contact, however weak, we must inevitably focus on Frangar and some excesses that can be found in their discography: their national-belligerent black metal has what it takes to ensure a call to arms, catapulting the listener into a trench in the First World War or in the company of troops located over



the Gothic Line back in the Forties. Just look at their debut album, *Totalitarian War* (2007), with assertive music made of songs like *In Armi, 1943* or *Lupi Bianchi*, followed a year later by the EP *1915 - Tutto per la Patria* (consisting of only three songs, but highly emblematic of the ideological journey undertaken by the Piedmont band: *Inno alla X Mas*, *La Settima di Dio*, *Presente*) and then the album *Bulloni, Granate, Bastoni* (2011), a disc enclosed in a digipak with bright graphics of futurist inspiration. Even the music, black metal bastardized by rock passages and outbursts of barbaric Oi!, shows the evolution of a project that seems to have found its final destination at the shores of a nostalgic Italian patriotism.



Let us get back to basics, that is, when the NSBM phenomenon established itself in Italy. One of the first signs was in Sardinia, at the beginning of the year 2000, with a label specializing in RAC and militant black metal called Ancient Blaze. Officially founded in autumn 2004 by Luca, it soon stood out for distributing a lot of material related to the National Socialist scene via mail order and for producing the only full-length by the notorious one-man band, Waffen SS.

*«I got into black metal in 1993 when, after years spent listening to classical heavy metal and later on death metal I was literally dazzled by Bathory's masterpiece Hammerheart. [...] At that time I had already been interested in politics for a while, and had already developed a vision of society and soil that was very radical and nationalist, therefore I appreciated bands*

*singing in their mother tongue and taking pictures with the flag of their country ... [...] What made me make the decision to found Ancient Blaze was the personal and ideological need to create a distribution that exclusively dealt with, and merged, the National Socialist ideal with black metal sounds, giving an elitist, clear and definite political connotation to the genre through the material that I subsequently distributed»<sup>9</sup>.*

With regard to the distinction that we mentioned earlier, between the essentially Italian phenomenon of Fascism and National Socialism, Luca seems to have a clear idea about why the doctrine of Mussolini has not taken root in the international black metal scene:

*«The primary issue is that Fascism is a concept that mainly concerns Italy, and not only as native political phenomenon of our peninsula. National Socialism is a broader concept that touches and embraces the whole of Europe and other countries, and as a result it is an ideology that is referenced by a wider and broader number of people. Compared to Fascism it has to be contextualized from a "global" point of view, as it touched many countries, not just Germany. Moreover, compared to Oi!/RAC, a street genre which deals with politics and the NS ideology in a much more direct and "social" manner, the main concept of the NSBM bands is that of esoteric and occult National Socialism. [...] Contrary to Fascism, National Socialism has many more esoteric and hermetic ideas, therefore this is undoubtedly important to understand the*

*reason why the approach of the NSBM movement was almost always turned to National Socialism»<sup>10</sup>.*



*The cover of the inquiry book on politicized black metal Unheilige Allianzen (2005)*

A few months after the official birth of Ancient Blaze, *The New Dawn of White Power* (2005) is released, the first and only album by Waffen SS, the creature of a single musician with the unmistakable *nom de plume* Herr Totenkopf. Produced in 500 copies, the album has all the credentials to be a success within the NSBM scene, with epic songs supported by choruses and well-constructed arrangements, while the themes combine Nazi ideology with that hint of Indo-Germanic mysticism that is particularly relevant to a certain school of esoteric Nazism. Not only does *The New Dawn of White Power* clearly stand out among the releases of that time, but the band also earns a mention in the

anti-Fascist research book on black metal published in Germany in the same year, *Unheilige Allianzen - Black Metal zwischen Satanismus, Heidentum und Neonazismus*. A form of involuntary advertising that further fueled the interest in this CD, so much so, that even today it is considered a valuable collector's item, and is sought on the international market too.

The project was born a few years earlier, and debuted with a demo very simply and bluntly titled *NSBM* (2001), followed by other tapes and split albums before the full-length came out. The band, however, was short-lived, since only two years after the release of this work, Herr Totenkopf blatantly abandoned the scene, publicly repudiating what he had previously achieved.

*«I met Herr Totenkopf in 2001. At that time I had a RAC band, Anticamera 88, with whom I was diligently trying the songs for the upcoming demo on CD-R that was due for release shortly after. But I needed a bass player that would record the parts in the studio, so a comrade we had in common introduced us. For a while now he had been releasing several demo tapes of his own project called Waffen SS. The label that produced his works was Odal Rune, run by one of my comrades back then, which he founded under my advice. I'm pretty sure that Odal Rune was the first purely NSBM label in Italy which dealt exclusively with this music sub-genre. They always produced their releases in ultra-limited and hand-numbered quantities, mostly on tape format and on a few occasions on CD-R format. [...] I noticed right away the excellent musical qualities of Herr Totenkopf. He was able to build great atmospheres, war-like and mystical, merging with intelligence rhythms and riffs that were rarely dull but rather exciting and interesting. He had an exceptional vision of NSBM, it was really easy for him to transform it all into music. So, after a few demos and split CD-Rs with some other local bands, again produced by Odal Rune (which ceased to exist a few months later) I thought it appropriate to produce the project professionally and with an up to standard graphic. Herr Totenkopf worked several months on new songs, and in 2005 The New Dawn of White Power came out on Ancient Blaze. The work got great feedback everywhere, the CD was printed in 500 pieces and sold out within a few months, getting support and appreciation from Europe and the United States, Asia and Australia»<sup>11</sup>.*

But in 2007, Herr Totenkopf decided to take some distance from the National Socialist scene and asked the owner of Ancient Blaze to publish a press release on the official website. A decision that marked the inexorable interruption of all liaisons between the label and the band.

*«Ancient Blaze label and distribution under the mandate of Herr Totenkopf of Waffen SS, releases the following important statement:*

*Due to the last events that occurred to the undersigned, and in view of the misunderstandings that continue to "hover" around the project Waffen SS, I want to clarify and make known*

that the latter was disbanded and abandoned two years ago already! The reason for this choice is the total lack of ideological/music interest, that once were the base and foundation of the group and are now abandoned by me. Waffen SS are no longer part of the NSBM movement nor of any political and music movement! Finally, I want to point out that the project has NEVER been tied to political and Satanist movements; Waffen SS have only ever expressed their own free opinion on the current sociopolitical situation in Europe and in our nation. I thank those few reliable people who have supported Waffen SS during these years.



*Herr Totenkopf, Waffen SS»<sup>12</sup>*

During its few years of activity, Ancient Blaze stood out for a feverish distribution of NSBM material. The turmoil of that period was evident and tangible and there were many practical reasons for joining an already established network like the Pagan Front.

*«I liked to import those titles that were hard to find in Europe, so I often contacted NSBM labels outside of Europe to receive 7"EPs, boxes, tapes, t-shirts and vinyls. Material worthy of any collector who is into this genre. The choice always occurred with the utmost care and attention, since my firm intention was to rigorously deal with National Socialist black metal, excluding from my catalog any other band that was not openly NSBM. After a while, I was contacted by the Pagan Front. I was asked if I wanted to become an official supporter, so they decided to include Ancient Blaze in a section of their website. Also, because of the reputation and respect enjoyed by the Pagan Front, the label now had a good visibility and popularity within the movement itself, the contacts and orders of the material increased day after day. [...] In Italy, apart from a few loyal supporters of Ancient Blaze, there was a very faint interest»<sup>13</sup>.*

After about five years since its foundation, Ancient Blaze closed its doors quietly in 2008. But while one label voluntarily chooses to vanish, old and new generations were ready to take over the vacant spot, and nowadays one of the most active and aggressive labels in Italy is, without a doubt, Black Shirts Records.



Based in the region of Lazio and managed by Sandro, who is also the notorious frontman of a Right-wing hardcore band called Hate for Breakfast, this young label and distributor of music propaganda already has a catalog of about fifteen albums and a large mailorder of hatecore, RAC, Oi!, NSBM and NSHC, National Socialist hardcore. The label always stood out for the attention given to NSBM, and its first release, in partnership with Algiz Art, was *Post Fata Resurgo* (2009), a peculiar album of «NS black fucking metal» by a band called Lvpvs Infestvs. About a year later, the anthology, *Discipline and Ironfist: Ten Years of Tiranny* (2010), was released, celebrating the Venetian band Via Dolorosa, one of the most famous projects of Italian NSBM.



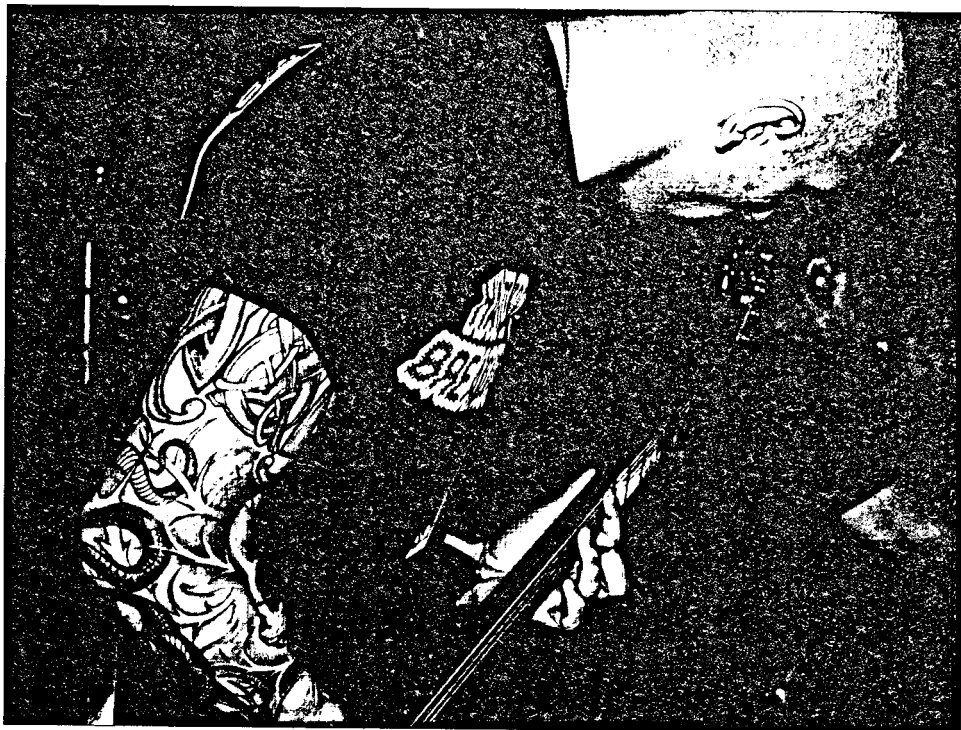
Lvpvs Infestvs and Via Dolorosa are two bands associated with the NSBM scene that are actually profoundly different and substantially distant from each other, especially if we try to compare the inclinations, ideas and beliefs that led them to get involved with the sonic assault of black metal.

The first was founded in mid-2000, between Rome and the Sicilian town of Modica. After one demo, *Vsque Ad Mortem* (2006), came the debut CD *Post Fata Resurgo*, which gathers a selection of seven tracks (and it also includes the original demo as a bonus for completists). It is a particularly fierce album, with tight riffing, that leaves very little room to breathe. Songs like *Disciplina di Odio*, *Un Intransigente '45* or *Ti Voglio Vedere Morto* are affected by heavy hardcore influences declined in a black metal key, a fact explained by the blatant as well as peculiar thanks addressed to a renowned grindcore band that is conceptually on the other side of the barricade - the Piedmont nihilists, Cripple Bastards.

Lvpvs, father-master of this band who is as hostile as its moniker (in Latin, Lvpvs Infestvs means "wolf enemy"), immediately shows his dedication to a cause that to him is first and foremost political.

*«The only reason why I started and continue to spread a concept is exclusively for the people with whom I share political battles every day, they are my true supporters, they are my family, because they share this sacrifice with me... I do not need other "fans". [...] The strength is*





*Lvpvs on stage*

*in the people who really believe in what they say, putting into practice their ideologies day after day on the streets and in life. The weak point is the insecure people who prefer to appear and fill their mouth with idle chatter»<sup>14</sup>.*

This idea is made explicit in a very pragmatic and direct manner in the motto reproduced in the booklet of *Post Fata Resurgo*: «*Fuck all those blacksters that dispense death from their bedrooms. Long live the street - Long live Fascism*». This active vision is similar to that of *Der Stürmer* from Greece, or the Russian groups headed by the *WotanJugend*, and essentially of that NSBM fringe that goes beyond mere propaganda and considers militancy the strength of its musical proposal.

*«If you do not choose to go down the street to fight every day, your emotions can never be sincere and then automatically your music will be fake»<sup>15</sup>.*

What clearly separates *Lvpvs Infestvs* from the rest of the NSBM scene is the lack of space given to idolizing Hitler (*Lvpvs* are in fact devoted to Mussolini), as well as a complete disregard for issues that are relevant to National Socialist esotericism, like the concept of *Kali-Yuga*, the dark age in which humanity has currently precipitated

according to the Indo-European doctrine. Lvpvs' speculation about it does not leave many questions, but rather demonstrates how his black metal is forged exclusively on the basis of an idea that mainly consists of militant and concrete Fascism (which Lvpvs cares to separate from National Socialist ideology) without offering concessions to any occult digression.

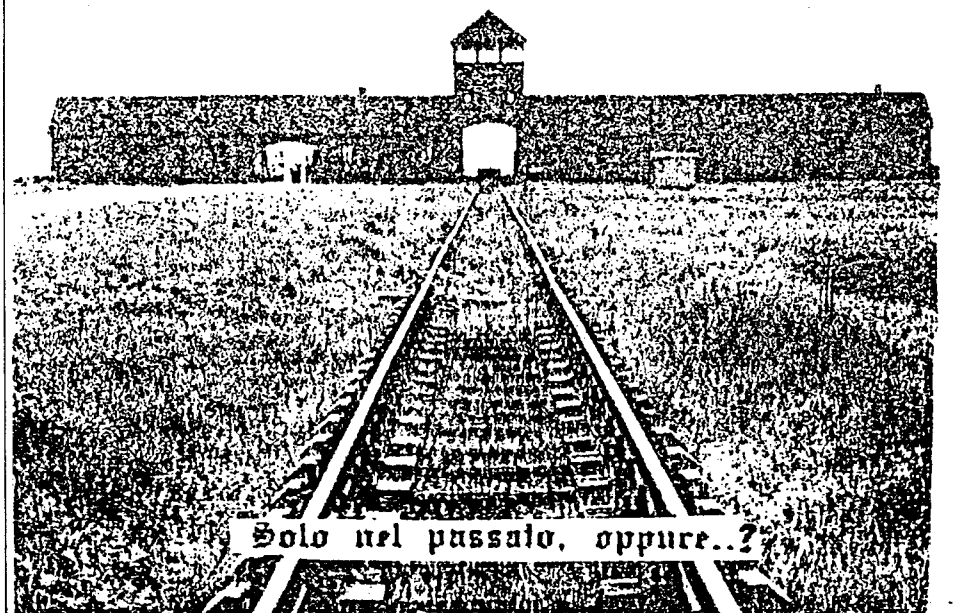
*«For me it's all bullshit! This country has other problems, we can't waste time with this nonsense [...] It's been more than half a century, the history and nations have changed, and the political battles have adapted to the historical context»<sup>16</sup>.*

We mentioned the profound differences, both in style and attitude, which place Lvpvs Infestvs in opposition to the other expression of Italian NSBM produced by Black Shirts Records: Via Dolorosa, a band originating from the Northeast which began in the late Nineties. We can assert without much hesitation, that this combo with a somewhat troubled line-up, was one of the earliest examples of total dedication to the combination of black metal and extreme ideologies. They themselves, through the voice of their leader V.O.N. Brahma FSS, certainly do not hide their mission: *«From the very beginning, the band's desire was very clear: to produce pure hatred in the form of music designed to propagate the healthiest and truest National Socialist ideals»<sup>17</sup>.*

The band debuted in 2000 with the tape *Trono di Sangue* (blatantly dedicated to "Uncle Adolf" and "Grandpa Benito"), and from then on, the number of their releases was unparalleled: in the course of a decade of activity they managed to record something like seventy (!) works among CDs, cassettes, split albums (numerous and



## LA DOLOROSA Uono Di Sangue

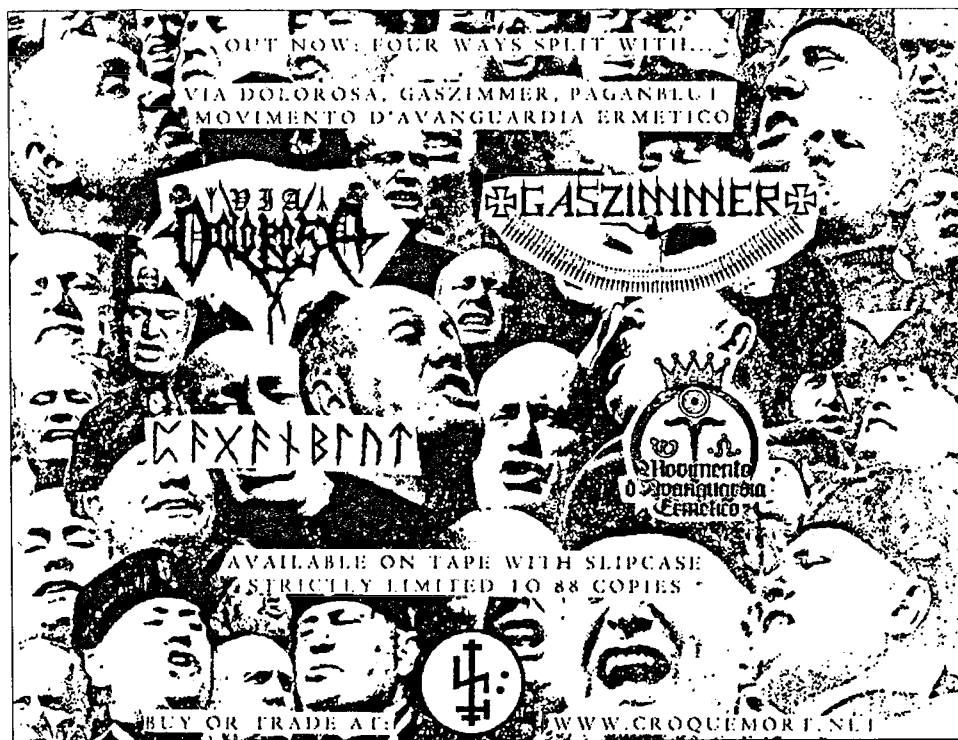


extremely varied), demos, EPs, live documents, and so on. Enough releases to easily confuse anyone who approaches the poisonous sound banquet set up by the band for the first time.

Quickly scrolling through the titles of the material they released over the years, Via Dolorosa prove that they have embarked on a one-way path, consciously choosing never to stray from the original route: *I Giorni del Combattimento*, *Dux*, *Total NSBM*, *Unità Testa di Morto*, *Gegen Juden*, *Holocaust*, *Israel Delenda Est*, *Aryan Terrorist*, until the anthology album *Discipline and Ironfist: Ten Years of Tyranny*.

«The CD *Discipline and Ironfist* is a great achievement for the band and, allow me to be a bit vain, also a fair reward after so





many years of work proudly devoted to the underground. [...] Sandro, the label boss, has been a supporter of Via Dolorosa for years, and the release of the CD was just the right conclusion of a long path of mutual respect and camaraderie. Let's not forget that Black Shirts is one of the few Italian labels that openly deals with a certain musical/ideological milieu that is feared by many... and vilely exploited by others for purely economic interests! [...] As the first fully professional work (excluding some releases on tape) I could not have wished for more»<sup>18</sup>.

The album is primarily a tribute, a retrospective of the first decade of terrorism in music put in place by the band from Vicenza. Twenty-five tracks that, starting from their debut on sparse tapes and limited edition CD-Rs, describe the history of one of the most well-known Italian NSBM projects. The print run is 1000 copies, which is almost a record since we are still talking about a very underground scene.

«It is undeniable that in recent times Via Dolorosa have created a certain interest and following around themselves. Some, when referring to the band, speak of worship or legend... I don't know, it is not for me to say that. I can only say that the fans (but I prefer to call them supporters) of Via Dolorosa are really loyal and avid! [...] Selling 100,000 copies on Nuclear Blast? What the fuck do I care! Few people, though, have come to understand what Via Dolorosa really is and what lies behind it... of course, it is not easy! I for one have always tried to hide the true



## Black Shirts Records

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meaning of the band, a sort of hermetic cult... those few who have embarked on a spiritual journey similar to mine have eventually come to the same conclusion: riding the tiger is not easy... but those who managed to, now see the world through different eyes, and some of them have become members of the band»<sup>19</sup>.

Musically speaking, one should not expect particularly metallic textures, or refined electric arrangements. Time after time, in compliance with the rule that wants NSBM to be monolithic, fierce and primitive, Via Dolorosa do not offer surprises or anything innovative. The band pursues a protocol of exhausting lo-fi cacophony, black metal that is guttural and unadorned, replete with violent Nazi slogans that are given by the handful.

«NSBM's main strength is its destructive violence, both musical and ideological. A primordial and ancient energy that is impossible to hold back!

A force designed to purify with fire the unhealthy ways that today's society imposes on these modern-day slaves: in simple words, creation through destruction. The ignorance and fear of the majority are the weakness that affects this kind of music, too many people are anchored to false ideals and historical notions learned in school from former hippy teachers, sons of bandits (or partisans, as some call them). The boycott made by certain labels/distributors verges on the ridiculous! Then the genre became fashionable and the merchants have fattened their already rich wallets...»<sup>20</sup>.

It should also be pointed out that Via Dolorosa are observant followers of those unwritten dictates of NSBM orthodoxy where bands are particularly sensitive to the themes of so-called magical Nazism; principles and theories that stretch to embrace teachings with explicit Indo-European references. In this sense, and in total contrast with the premises that animate Lvpvs Infestvs, street politics, not to mention actual work within the social environment, have no room in Via Dolorosa. Music and politics do not go hand in hand.

«I believe in music as a form of ideological propaganda, but not politics. Currently, I do not support any political party nor do I feel I can trust any politician who greets me with the Roman salute at his convenience. Once they take their seat, history does not change, people do. I will never stop repeating that in National Socialism there was very little politics...»<sup>21</sup>.

Another band often thrown into the cauldron of National Socialist black metal made in Italy are A.M.B.S. (acronym for A Monumental Black Statue), a duo - Deus Hermes and Xyx - formed fairly recently in 2007, between Perugia and



*Aere Perennius (2010),  
A Monumental Black Statue's debut album*

its province. There are several aspects that make their approach to the genre unique, and to speak of them as NSBM in the strict sense is a little misleading; although some contact points are definitely there, the duo is keen to distinguish their work, describing it as a project of «nationalism in music»<sup>22</sup>. All of the eight tracks on the debut full length *Aere Perennius* (2010)<sup>23</sup> are sung in Italian, and the themes they evoke are evenly split between references to the myth of the blood, the condemnation of the modern world, tales of the Fascist period and chronicles of turbulent life experiences: a violent alchemy that mixes black metal and street RAC with fairly straight and even scandalous language.

Despite a well-received debut album, A.M.B.S. announced their decision to split up in early 2012, right after the release of their second album, aptly titled *L'Ultimo Sogno*<sup>24</sup>; but in the summer of the same year Xyx announced his intention to pursue the path of A.M.B.S. on his own. A change that will prevent the band from actually splitting up.



When talking about A.M.B.S. it is plain to see that the band cannot be accused of strict observation of the NSBM criteria. It is also true that there are actually even more distant realities from the National Socialist environment, which inevitably end up being associated with the same circle.





*Absentia Lunae live during the 2012 European tour named In Gloria Solis Atri*

One example is the label from Trieste, Aeternitas Tenebrarum Music Foundation (hence ATMF), originally born in early 2000 as a web portal dedicated to the cause of black metal. In 2005, a leap in quality led to the creation of a real label with mail order, and in just about five years of activity, the newly founded record company released nearly fifty albums, both through its main production channel (ATMF) and some sub-labels devoted to more refined/experimental sounds (A Sad Sadness Song) or more fierce and radical ones (De Tenebrarum Principio).

Glancing at the label's catalog, any fan of the genre can confirm that ATMF's roster does not include any bands directly related to the NSBM scene. Sure, in the past a few small disagreements between the label and the specialized press have had the Italian band Janus and Norway's Forgotten Woods as the main protagonists, but these are really too minor to formulate any specific complaints<sup>25</sup>.

The first problems and related charges of explicit apology addressed to ATMF took shape in early 2011, when the main label took *Radikale Randgruppe*, the latest effort by Norway's Disiplin under its wing, a blatant NSBM album packed with unambiguous ideologies. The album unleashed a media uproar among supporters of the label, who were disoriented by a selection so controversial; the distributors were ready to openly



boycott them, and the magazines devoted to extreme music refused to deal with such material, as it was considered too extreme.

Diego and Michele, owners of ATMF, were also directly involved in the ensemble of belligerent Italian black metal called Absentia Lunae, and at the same time when Disiplin's album was released, their band suffered the cancellation of the last date of the European tour in Frankfurt.

*«We've been banned from Frankfurt due to the threats received by the organizer of the Welt in Trümmern festival by antifas. The German Police warned by antifas and Frankfurt's city council has been forced to issue a ban against us. [...] We feel that we do NOT have to say sorry or to justify ourselves with anyone. The contents of our music (both visually and lyrically) are public and anybody with a working brain can understand what Absentia Lunae are about. [...] From our side we take this with irony since it's quite funny to see how antifas work very well together with the establishment that they want us to believe they're against. They're the most zealous political police of a status quo we consider the enemy. Nothing more than conservative puppets»<sup>26</sup>.*

The "Disiplin affair" is approached with the same uncompromising attitude:

*«Starting from the fact that for us Radikale Randgruppe is a great piece of art, it is undoubtedly extreme from every point of view. That matters to us a lot. You can support Disiplin's ideas, you can bash their arguments but you can't ignore them. Why? Because whether you like it or not they have something to say, and that is unquestionably disturbing for people that are used to listen to music or enjoy other forms of art that from our point of view can be defined empty, childish and/or harmless at best. Satanism and satanic iconography are not anymore a "destabilizing" factor in nowadays extreme music but are rather on a "commonly accepted clichés" level. Wasn't extreme music's "shocking" thematics and iconography the key factor to reach a wider public? And therefore its protest against a reality perceived as hypocritical and senseless, its*



*truest and inner meaning? So, speaking to those who feel themselves offended by the ideas of Disiplin or another band, instead of questioning us or raising some funny "politically correct" slogans what you should do is to revert your hunger for answers and ask to yourself why you're listening to "extreme" music and if this really fits you. [...] Our ideas may even differ from Disiplin's but as long as we can share some compatible counter values against the modern world, we will totally support our bands. No distinctions, no exceptions. Even if we don't agree with our artists ideas, partly or totally»<sup>27</sup>.*

The issues raised by ATMF are interesting, and pose some clear questions in regard to the consumption of contemporary extreme music by an ever-increasing audience, that apparently is also less and less inclined to tolerate extremisms when they flow into an ideological territory: hence the rejection of the idea that extreme metal can be considered "acceptable" only on the basis of an unwritten rule that wants it permeable to every excess, as long as it is harmless, thus ensuring the preservation of today's status quo. At the same time, the strong defense of their artists puts them between a rock and a hard place that is likely to result in a paradox on multiple levels, putting them in a position to be considered as both a bulwark of freedom of expression and a potential vehicle for the spreading of ideologies that are oppressive and against freedom.



Having reached the end of this Italian overview, we can note how local NSBM remains a very marginal phenomenon. In spite of some isolated tremors, which occurred unevenly up and down the *Bel Paese*, the new generations that - we assume - could take the baton passed by the foreign bands, have started to come forth only in very recent times.

Almost seventy years after the fall of the Fascist regime, and in a moment when the Right-wing movements seem to have returned to influence young people and their music, one has to wonder who and how many will choose to take the path of black metal as a megaphone for the propaganda of Mussolini-inspired slogans. It is still too early to assess the actual stability of this trend, but given the unrest that is shaking the underground, it is not hard to believe that the coming years will bring the Italian scene to a more prominent position on the international NSBM chessboard.

## Notes:

1 - Burzum, *Non fate troppi pettegolezzi*, from Metal Hammer n.5, May 2012.

2 - Der Stürmer, from Legeones, 2006.

3 - Wolfnacht, from Ghost Kommand n.3, spring/summer 2008.

4 - From the biographical notes on the booklet of the CD *Mortualia Nocturnum* (Vomit Arcanus Productions 2008).

5 - Ibid.

6 - Movimento d'Avanguardia Ermetico, from *Exoterica* n.1, 2009.

7 - Some are quite famous and well-known names within the Italian scene. Think for example, of Spite Extreme Wing and their record production, which in terms of quality, stands out from the majority of the contemporary Italian (and foreign) bands.

8 - Excerpt from Black Metal Invitta Armata's official website ([www.signum-martis.org](http://www.signum-martis.org)).

9 - Ancient Blaze, interview with the authors, March 2012.

10 - Ibid.

11 - Ibid.

12 - Statement published on Ancient Blaze's website dated November 18, 2007 (<http://ancientblaze.altervista.org>).

13 - Ancient Blaze, interview with the authors, March 2012.

14 - Ibid.

15 - Ibid.

16 - Ibid.

17 - Via Dolorosa, from the biography published on the band's official website ([www.via-dolorosa.com](http://www.via-dolorosa.com)), 2008.

18 - Via Dolorosa, interview with the authors, October 2011.

19 - Ibid.

20 - Ibid.

21 - Ibid.

22 - See what the band stated when interviewed by the authors in the in-depth dossier right after this chapter.

23 - Another link with the NSBM scene comes from the fact that the album was released by the Australian National Socialist label War Doctrine, which started its controversial war-sound propaganda activities with this album. As told by Deus Hermes of A.M.B.S. in an interview with the authors: *«We put a track on MySpace containing some parts of the pre-master, still without vocals, to give an idea of what the end result would be. After that we started adding contacts until we received an email from War Doctrine. I must admit I am very satisfied with their work, they were quick and took care of every detail».*

24 - "The Last Dream". The album came out in the Fall of 2012 on the Mexican label Death Cult Records.

25 - Many have not appreciated certain references in the album *Race of Cain* (2007) by Forgotten Woods, especially in the last song of the album, *Third Eye (New Creature)*, which contains a spoken interlude by the controversial industrial agitator Boyd Rice, engaged in a strongly anti-democratic (to put it mildly) debate. The



## INTOLLERANZA ITALIANA

following year, it was the third album by the Genoese combo Janus, titled *Vega*, that triggered a media conflict between the band (supported by ATMF), and the British magazine Terrorizer. The latter chose not to feature the Italian band since, according to the editorial staff, there were not adequate guarantees with regard to the political background of the Italian combo «[...] *At that point whether or not we covered Janus stopped hinging on whether or not ATMF would actually answer our very simple question (Friends of Benito? Yes/No?)*», excerpt from the official forum of the magazine Terrorizer (<http://forum.terrorizer.com>).

26 - *Absentia Lunae Banned from Frankfurt!*, official statement published on the ATMF website ([www.atmf.net](http://www.atmf.net)), 2011. It is also true that on that evening the band from Trieste decided to step on stage anyway, causing a sort of blitzkrieg at the end of the festival.

27 - *Who's Afraid of the Wolf?*, official statement published on ATMF's website ([www.atmf.net](http://www.atmf.net)), 2011.

## Italian labels : A confrontation of ideas

*«PROPAGANDA CONSISTS OF THE PLANNED USE OF ANY FORM OF PUBLIC OR MASS-PRODUCED COMMUNICATION DESIGNED TO AFFECT THE MINDS AND EMOTIONS OF A GIVEN GROUP FOR A SPECIFIC PUBLIC PURPOSE, WHETHER MILITARY, ECONOMIC, OR POLITICAL»<sup>1</sup>*

[PAUL LINEBARGER]

**I**n the course of this examination of the NSBM phenomenon there have been numerous contacts with multiple worldviews that have somehow endorsed the spreading of ideological black metal. The labels especially, through their promotion and distribution activities, have allowed a more or less widespread settlement of all those bands and projects devoted to the National-Socialist cause. Various labels, like a bridgehead, have ensured the ideal logistical outpost for a constant supply of this unique sound paraphernalia. It should also be clarified that the approach to NSBM may vary considerably from case to case, and each label proves to apply a specific as well as personal ethic with regard to the phenomenon. For this reason, we have decided to involve two labels, brought together for having drawn from the same scene, but whose attitude is actually profoundly different.

On one hand, Black Shirts Records gives an almost fideistic political priority to the dictates of Fascism, a factor that is reflected accordingly in each band on the roster. On the other hand, Aeternitas Tenebrarum Music Foundation has chosen a "no compromise" approach according to which, in spite of the ideas expressed by the bands they produce, they must still be guaranteed freedom of expression, even if it should result in a most brazen and unrepentant NSBM. It is also true that ATMF began as a record company deeply rooted in an all-encompassing black metal, but the numerous opposing ideas that it has fueled in recent years have made it the target of severe criticism over its actions, judged by many (and therein lies the paradox) as too "permissive".

### Black Shirts Records

With little more than a couple of years of activity behind it, (the label was officially born on April 20, 2009, the release date of the first CD in its catalog), BSR already boasts several record productions, in addition to many other activities ranging from the

organization of concerts to the actions of its leader, Sandro (who, as we have already mentioned, is also involved in the NSHC band called Hate for Breakfast). Although it exclusively dwells within music, the *raison d'être* of BSR has the unique purpose of being another weapon of propaganda, used in accordance with a pragmatic, sharp and unequivocal principle: «*Fuck music... only Fascism!*»<sup>2</sup>.

**Black Shirts Records is a rather young company in the underground scene, what prompted you to start such a label? What are your goals, considering the bands that you have produced so far?**

Black Shirts Records is a very young label, not only within the underground scene but I dare say, in its spirit too! The project took shape in early 2009 and it may sound

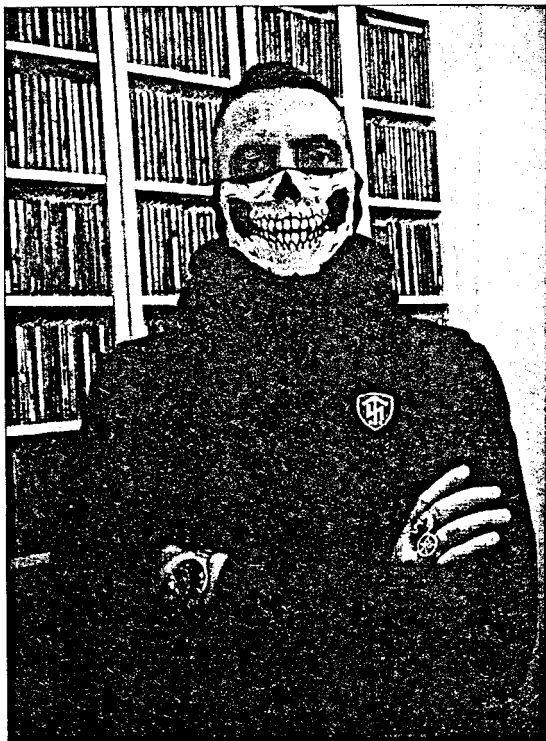
strange but the idea came from the name and not vice versa. Black Shirts Records has the clear purpose of producing records by and for the "black shirts", and it doesn't matter if the genre is black metal/RAC/Oi! or hardcore.

**To date your catalog is equally divided between Fascist-oriented punk/hardcore and NSBM. Are these the genres of reference for Black Shirts Records? Or do you consider the music style a secondary element in relation to the ideology that animates the bands you sign?**

Let's say that the genres listed above are part of my DNA, that is the music I grew up with, that I listen to most frequently, but it is obvious that for the label the music style is only a corollary to the Idea. As I already said above, I am interested in giving space to bands that live Fascism, that put it into practice in their everyday life, and above all do not try to "surprise" the unwary listener with fake proclamations stuffed with corny shit.

**According to your experience, which are the strong and weak points within the NSBM scene?**

The weaknesses are definitely represented by the myriad of mongos revolving around the so-called NSBM scene. Social network misanthropes, troglodytes who



*Sandro (Hate for Breakfast / Black Shirts Records)*

# HATE FOR BREAKFAST SQUADRISMO HARDCORE



*Two examples of Black Shirts Records' productions  
that fall outside of NSBM*

embrace "the scene" because they are convinced that National Socialism is synonymous with evil (unfortunately there are many), members of bands that are considered "cult" who do not even have an hour of political activism in their background, children with acne that soil four sheets of paper and call it a 'zine, clowns facepainted with cumshots that make photo sessions for badly photocopied - and possibly recorded even worse - cassettes (hence the word "true") that in most cases don't even get out of their apartment building (hence the description "for the elite"), labels that are managed ass-backwards, bands that are totally useless, with lyrics that border on the pathetic, and I could go on for much longer, but I'd rather stop here. In short, the current National Socialist black metal panorama seems to me nothing short of ridiculous. By no means does it represent a danger to the enemy (as early black metal used to be), far from it, it is the archetypal stereotype of a modest freakshow - of course this does not apply to every band. With regard to the strong points, I think we can speak of a single



devastating aspect which is however ferally lethal, that is, the majesty of the Idea set to music! This is certainly the absolute example of objective danger when listening to NSBM; I must also add that some Eastern European NSBM bands, but also Greek, and even some Italian ones, are able to express it masterfully!

Normally, most of the Italian bands that in some way fall in the NSBM category choose a clearly "orthodox" approach (almost a cliché, at times). Despite the historical and political peculiarities of our country, why do many bands prefer to refer to National Socialism instead of Fascism? Do you think it is because of aesthetics, esotericism or politics? Do you think it's fair that there is a clear distinction between the two movements?

Starting from the last question and at the risk of sounding "blasphemous" I see no significant distinction between the glorious revolution of the black shirts and that of the brown shirts with the crooked cross. In fact, the two revolutions do not "continue" the absolutist State under new rules, but put it in a new relationship with the People. [...] I believe that most of the people involved in NSBM, convinced of embracing that orthodoxy you are referring to, ignore or even worse, do not know all the key figures of the most intransigent Fascism such as Giovanni Preziosi or Niccolò Giani, Alessandro Pavolini or Guido Pallotta just to name a few.

**Is there a typical customer/supporter of your label? Do you have an opinion about your buyers?**

My mother definitely doesn't buy from my mail order.



## Aeternitas Tenebrarum Music Foundation

It is always interesting to note that the label "National Socialist metal" is so dangerously adhesive and ready to stick on every conceivable surface, indelibly marking anyone who comes within its range. Upon interviewing the ATMF duo a few months after the events that involved Disiplin and Absentia Lunae (which we recounted above), the reality of things appears quite different. Although the area of inspiration rests on a foundation of shared related tensions, rather than talking about a sudden "NSBM turn" we have to take note that in this case we are faced with a situation that is much more heterogeneous and complex: a label, and consequently a band too, devoted to the



idea of black metal as a deeply alternative vision, as opposed to the quiet daily life of the modern world - regardless of any political affiliation, which is, in fact, categorically rejected.

In spring 2011, you released a particularly controversial album that created quite a bit of clamor: *Radikale Randgruppe* by the Norwegian band Disiplin. ATMF is not a Nazi label (on your website there is the phrase "*ATMF is not and will never be a politicized label or a tool of political propaganda*"), yet you have released a record that somehow pushed you to the forefront of the NSBM scene. What led you in this direction? What has been the impact on your business?

[Diego]: It seems that NSBM is a disgrace, the censors marginalize it, and the ghettoized suffer from the Stockholm syndrome. As it often happens when we are confronted with issues of etiquette or, conversely, of losers logic, we just don't care and simply move on. The important thing is always the substance, not the label. Let me be clear: we do not have any problems dealing with these issues, but they will never hold us hostage. We feel perhaps more aligned with some ideas, principles, and values that animated the most turbulent movements of the twentieth century, rather than a music scene or group of acolytes. Man is measured by his deeds, not the herd to which he belongs. [...] That said, *Radikale Randgruppe* has been one of the highest points of ATMF's artistic experience, the manifestation of the worst nightmares of our fellow men, a seemingly incommunicative charge of hatred and dissolution in frequencies; in a nutshell a sublime experience, a low blow to the various moss collectors, lovers of the old school Norwegian black metal.

How this may have changed our experience? In many ways... too many perhaps, but as we often say, we couldn't have done otherwise: this is our fate, it is where our actions, conscious or consistently unconscious have led us. Let's talk about distribution, the fact that we have become like the plague for the German market that matters, but we found a lot of support from those who value us for what we are or those who openly support the logic of comparison/provocation and ideological confrontation that our label has against the modern world and the mental and economic systems that it is subjected to. Before ATMF promoted bands such as Absentia Lunae and Disiplin, it was viewed with sympathy and fondled by the scenes that matter, but their economic enticements were returned to sender when they started blackmailing us, asking us to surrender. [...] We have gone past this threshold and now we feel free, they can't blackmail us, we can't be bought. This differentiates idealism and rebellion from politics, therefore black metal and NSBM can never be a political genre, at least in the modern sense of the term. The criticism that sometimes we are moved by some areas of the NSBM scene is that we don't share with them the logic of pleased convicts, of ghettoized rebels. Primordial black metal has grown thanks to the media hype of its deeds and its ideas, playing on common sense and causing the subsequent reaction, nothing different from what we do today on a cultural level.

Our approach is blasé but especially solar (although in our own way) and rebellious, like someone who doesn't want to give in to all those who would like you to be an easy target for their bigoted beliefs. We want to get down "on the streets" and reach within the metal scene and the like, because we think that our faces don't deserve to remain in the crevices of life. Should we put ourselves on the defensive, for us rebellious spirits, it would be the end, but an end that wouldn't even be noticed by the majority, a detail in a gray story that is already written. Musical dissidence, counterculture and metapolitics now animate

ATMF, which has become *la Frontiera dell'Essere*.

**What is your opinion on the NSBM scene? Which are, according to you, its strengths and weaknesses?**

[Michele]: In a word: bad. There are individual projects that in terms of music and concept are certainly very valid, but besides counting them on one maimed hand, they are as rare as hen's teeth, and the NSBM label is probably too limiting for them, but it was probably stuck on them for a mere question of "journalistic" categories. On the other hand, if the NSBM cauldron contains at least the majority of bands that self-proclaimed themselves as such (directly or indirectly), the outcome can be nothing but bleak, on all fronts. Finding something that is barely above mediocrity is as rare as winning the lottery. There is almost never anything to save: insignificant music, coarse and tacky aesthetics, and a conceptual aspect worthy of the worst totalitarianisms. It is because of the critical nature of this legacy, that it should be approached with a lively spirit, strong, cheerful and able to discern the gold from the crumbling ruins now reduced to a heavy burden. I am referring to a series of "truths" (or supposed such) that could be considered "true" only under the historical reality and customs of that time. I



am referring to topics that are now ancient, such as biological racism, just to name the most controversial: had there been a real and overwhelming supremacy we would not be talking in these terms, and probably not even in this language. NSBM has just one strength which, paradoxically, is also its only point of weakness, and vice versa: NSBM itself. Its credibility is just so little that we can hardly consider it as a real threat to any defender of political correctness. When this happens, the accusers will qualify for what they are: idiots, or simply and profoundly more German than the most obtuse of Germans.

Some think that the release of an album considered "difficult" such as *Race of Cain* by Forgotten Woods constitutes a questionable precedent for your label.

Although we are talking about a band that has little in common with the NSBM scene, we are faced with the paradox of a work deemed unsuitable for its anti-democratic content...

[Michele]: What can I say, if the "unsuitable" comes from a strict market analysis, it might be true, or not. Those who say that the label NSBM

closes the doors of distribution are right, but they forget that it opens other doors, different but paradoxically the same: in neither case does musical/artistic quality really matter. But if we're talking in terms of "ethics", then I can only laugh.

**Is there some sort of trend linked to the so-called NSBM? Do you think that some bands consciously pick a daring ideological tactic to disguise a mere technical incompetence**

[Diego]: This seems at least likely, and the same happens in other genres and sub-genres of extreme metal, and black metal in particular. This attitude is typical of the RAC scene, which places the dogma or the proclamations on top of everything. Our approach is rather to start from the goal we want to achieve, so that it will become the inspiring force. We happily listen to more direct sounds as well, but when we think about what we want to promote and encourage, we always aim high. The arrow shot from our bow is the symbol of the ambition of our spirit, to rise from the mundane and see some aspects of life under a different light. Ideology is like religion, a tool for mass classification in order to control big or small areas. I prefer to grasp its substance and place it on a transcendental level, an eternal struggle between forces that are coexisting and functional, creation and destruction, both worthy of respect.

ASS.NE CVLTVRALE



**If tomorrow a new, explicitly National Socialist band asked you to be released on your label, how would you consider this opportunity?**

[Diego]: As always: we would listen, we would see what genuine and deep aspects this band embodies and we would deliberate. The Anarchism that animates us cannot stop in front of the paranoia of a displaced spirit.

### Notes:

1 - P. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare*, Infantry Journal Press, Washington 1948.

2 - Black Shirts Records, interview with the authors, February 2012.

Interview with:

## A Monumental Black Statue

**I**n October 2011, we asked a few questions to Deus Hermes of A.M.B.S., he answered in a friendly but direct and explicit manner. His words give further evidence of how the environment in which music and extreme ideologies coexist does not have determined and universally recognized references, at least on an artistic level. What emerges is the image of a bunch of loose dogs, each bent on its own way and its own individual mission. A consideration that is further strengthened by a need for necessary distinctions between a sort of - allow us the term - generalist NSBM and the attitude of individual formations that, as in the case of A.M.B.S., favor a distinctly nationalist vision and are therefore, almost like a reflex, Mussolinian.

**Can you tell us what your first steps were within the black metal scene? What attracted you to this genre?**

In 1999 I approached "dark" sounds mainly because I was fascinated by the occult and Satanism in the most orthodox sense of the term, ergo I began to research not only in books, but also in the music sphere. It just so happened that while I was in a record store I was fascinated by some album covers that used certain symbols, so I bought a few of those. From that moment on, something that today is much more than just a passion was born. The thing that immediately struck me was the almost "sacred" atmosphere, devoid of the rock'n'roll attitude that I found in other genres such as death or thrash metal. Black metal as we live it is something completely different from the rest, it is something detached and spiritually pure. It must not be confused with other metal genres, it is not music for fun or to spend time drinking and talking shit, but it is something serious and mature, and if done the right way it can carry a very high esoteric potential.

**With regard to your experience, which are the strong points and the weaknesses within the NSBM scene?**





*Deus Hermes and Xyx in an archive picture of A.M.B.S. original line-up*

From the idea that I've got over the years, the strength is in individualism (an opposite concept to National Socialism, something we could discuss for hours in this context) and in the small number of bands that are loyal to their ideal. Badly produced songs and sometimes even poorly played manage to be epic and powerful, this is the strength of the spirit. But NSBM (and not only this sub-genre) is a double-edged sword which, because of the small circle of bands and the often poor productions, gets cut off. And considering that it is a Right-wing art form, it is cut off even more.

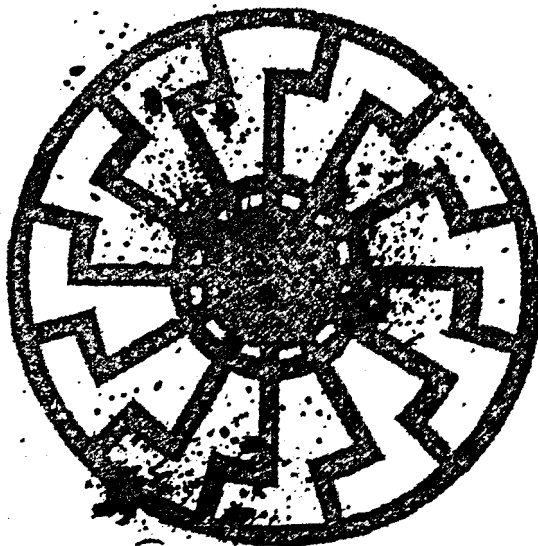
**What opinion do you have of your supporters? Do you think they understand your *Weltanschauung*?**

We consider A.M.B.S. a band devoted to putting nationalism into music, with a very personal and arrogant concept, a big "fuck you" to the Leftist and liberal world. I don't know if everyone was able to see the irony and the "high spirits" behind certain "verses", I consider the Right-wing ideal a pure one, solar and powerful, that's why I wanted to use cheerful and almost laughable tones in the lyrics.

**Considering your definition of A.M.B.S. as a vehicle of «nationalism in music», in a way you proved to be a rare bird: as a rule most of the Italian bands that in some way follow your same path prefer to employ their energies towards a strictly orthodox NSBM. Despite the historical and political peculiarities of your country, why do a lot of bands prefer to refer to National Socialism instead of Fascism? Do you think it's an esoteric, aesthetic or political matter? Do you think an open distinction between the two movements is legitimate?**

I believe that to be a good band you need personality, experimentation and boldness, stagnation leads to boredom. Falling into genres that do not belong to us, and doing

things that do not belong to us in national/cultural terms, I call that xenophilia! I see masses of kids (and also brain-damaged grown-ups) fascinated by the Nordic culture that wear Thor's hammers, drink from horns and use Scandinavian names or runes for the logos of their autistic "bands", despite coming from Naples or Palermo and other Southern cities. All this is bad, all this makes me sick! I would like to tear them to pieces one by one. Our tradition is far more profound and interesting than the barbaric one, our tradition has established the

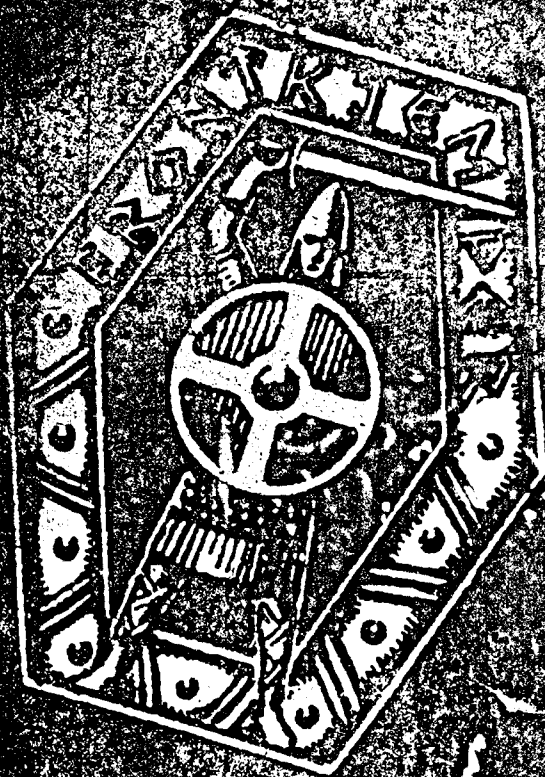


foundations for almost everything that is good and functioning today. I can understand the interest and curiosity (which I also have myself) towards other European traditions, this is only a good thing, after all, despite being different and divided, there has always been something that binds us, but what pisses me off is that the Italian populace has no culture and they have been taught for generations to despise their own country because it is more convenient and easy to do so. The vast majority of Italians hate, do not know, ignore, forget and deny their own culture but glorify others! Be them African, Jamaican, American or Scandinavian, the "trend" is to do anything that is not Italian, our own, traditional. That's why many bands identify themselves more with National Socialism rather than with Fascism; it is not a tragedy, but there is the feeling that there is xenophilia even on our part. Moreover, the average metalhead is stupid, therefore attracted to dull and rough things, which is why he falls for crap like gothic metal, metalcore or technical-brutal-death shit that is so trendy today. All this saddens me and takes me further away from this "movement" of losers.

**Can music and politics go hand in hand? Does it make sense to talk about militancy in music, or is it legitimate to keep things along two separate tracks, avoiding risky "intersections"?**

It makes sense. We, and other bands, will remain active until the day we get tired or we have expressed everything. I just think that the Right-wing deserves a place in every area, enough with censorship, we must be able to have our say, right? Music and politics sometimes do not get along well, we know that, but this is not the usual Anarcho/Communist type of revolt, for us this is something much more profound, almost religious. We will continue on this path until the day we have time and inspiration for this project. It is a small outlet for the truth.





# Ultima Thule

## NSBM in the triumvirate of the extreme North

«IF MEN WISH TO ONE DAY FIND THE WORLD OF THE HYPERBOREANS AND BECOME SIMILAR TO THE GODS, IT IS TOWARDS THE NORTH THAT THEY HAVE TO UNFOLD THEIR SAILS AND SHAKE THEIR OARS. WHERE NORTH AND WEST MEET, THE SUN NEVER SETS»<sup>1</sup>

[JEAN MABIRE]

**F**or a long time we have wondered what chance environmental and social factors have made Northern Europe the cradle of black metal and its iconoclastic fury. To date, however, there is no single answer and the theories out there are essentially speculative, based on an analysis of circumstantial conditions and the often contradictory and fragmented reports of those involved. In the essay *Lords of Chaos*, Moynihan and Söderlind examine some causes that may have contributed to setting these events in motion. They pay specific attention to the epicenter of the phenomenon, Norway, a rich and quiet country with less than five million inhabitants. They find clues in the relative geographical marginality of the nation and the possible misunderstanding - at a time when the Internet was still far from creating a global village - of the message gleaned from the lyrics and the iconography of the pioneers of black metal, in particular Britain's Venom. Similarly, the particularly advanced welfare model of the countries of the Scandinavian bloc, for years the bastions of social democracy, has guaranteed high standards of excellence with regard to the quality of life, but on the other hand might have built a society too static and leveling, that is experienced with a sense of apathy which inspires the desire to make a clean break from the established rules.

It is impossible not to deem the presence of the Christian religion (in its Evangelical Lutheran form) in Norway as pivotal, in terms of rules and impositions. Its influence on society, however, seems rather modest despite more than 80% of the population claiming adherence. This number does not justify the escalation of events where the brutal and systematic attack of its religious symbols was only the tip of the iceberg. On the other hand, the gradual diminishing of religious power that occurred in the last decades of the past millennium and the rise of a constitution of States with an increasingly secular orientation, gave way to the growth of borderline religious currents such as Satanism. In hindsight, and in light of subsequent developments within the metal scene, Satanism simply appears as a primitive form of opposition to the existing religion. It served as an accessible medium through which to channel a fury that still lacked a coherent philosophical

dimension. The proof is that this infatuation with evil was soon abandoned, or it evolved into a rediscovery of ancestral paganism (and also of shamanism and traditional esotericism), first through a rough overlap of the two concepts - paganism as a branch of Satanism in its broadest sense - then gradually with a more structured reconnection to the past of their people, their land and traditions.

As already mentioned, however, these are sociological speculations that alone do not offer a satisfactory answer. Similarly, we may consider the harsh climate as relevant, with the wildlife and polar nights, but even then, we would not know for sure why black metal was born in Norway and not in Canada. As meticulous as we can be in reconstructing the scenario, we will not be able to isolate the spark that triggered the fire.

Bearing these factors in mind, we face a similar situation when we analyze the NSBM phenomenon, which is a direct descendent of black metal and shares some conceptual foundations with the latter. However, NSBM also reacts to further historical and social stimulations. Over the past century, Norway, Sweden and Finland have experienced reasonably different events. During the Second World War, Sweden tried as much as possible to remain neutral: although by necessity it maintained cautious - and controversial, according to some historians - relations with Germany. In all probability, this was a subtle political game designed to avoid a quick degeneration of events that would have undermined national sovereignty. The fate that befell Norway was decidedly different, as it was invaded in 1940 and placed under the yoke of a collaborationist government ruled by Vidkun Quisling until 1945. This mark on Norwegian history has left traces to this day, and has condemned Quisling (later executed for high treason) to a *damnatio memoriae*, only briefly interrupted by the expressions of esteem tributed by Varg Vikernes. Finland had a doubly adverse fate: first it had to twice face the tumultuous advance of the Red Army which, forcing its way through the Eastern borders tried to enter Europe (Winter War and Continuation War); and later, at the end of the conflict, it also had to fight back the German troops from the territories of the Far North (War of Lapland). Each nation has a history that, in one way or another, was influenced by Nazism, a ghost that over time has been painstakingly driven back into the depths of memory but which is promptly recalled again and again - as either an actual belief or as an anti-system provocation - by the followers of NSBM.

In more recent years, it was the civilian society that had to go through radical changes, in large part due to the implementation of the agreements that led to the formation of the European Community. Adherence to the Schengen treaty effectively made it easier to move around the continent, fueling migration flows that were strongly directed towards Northern Europe, attracted by its excellent quality of life. Sweden, the most populous and perhaps most cosmopolitan of all, seemed to be the most popular destination, and this has certainly encouraged the rise of numerous Right-wing political organizations, which have left their mark on the country in recent years. In Norway, a growing Muslim presence is documented, the result of migrations from the Balkans



and Iraq, which has made Islam the second religion to spread throughout the region. From this point of view, only Finland seems demographically more stable, with a sensibly lower immigration rate.

Potentially encouraging elements for the development of radical ideologies are also found within the economy. Social democracy as a political movement (and it is evident in the degree of progress and wealth of the Nordic countries) has never denied a certain vocation to capitalism which, in the globalized world, also invites investments by major powers like the United States. Concepts such as free markets, globalism, and turbocapitalism have always been considered a threat by those who take a certain ultra-conservative political stance, primarily because they are seen as weapons in the hands of lobbies, and secondly because they are seen as tools for the eradication of popular culture and individual national identities as well as being bearers of the worst values.

The historical past of these three countries and the current social and economic conditions are pieces of a puzzle that, once completed, may reveal a broader overview which could be useful in understanding how and why certain feelings and ideological reminiscences have a better grip on one country rather than another. With this in mind, it is obvious how nationalist or expressly National Socialist movements, paganism and racial issues - for years the exclusive prerogative of the extreme Right - have found an unexpected ally in black metal and its crusade against society, progressively converging towards a common vision.

Despite having researched and categorized some potential triggers, we do not have an infallible key to fully understand what has favored or discouraged the spreading of NSBM in these countries. Hence, we can not be certain of the reasons why, Norway for example, has an almost non-existent - if not denigrated by the early black metal bands - NSBM scene. In Sweden the scene is strongly interconnected with the skinhead milieu, while in Finland it seems to be easily assimilated in traditional black metal, with numerous bands using thorny themes or iconographies without fear of being stigmatized and without the desire to be identified or isolated within a predefined ideological milieu.

Well aware of the impossibility of analyzing all the variables and reasons behind the development of National Socialist black metal in the whole of Northern Europe, we will investigate each of these countries in detail.

## Norway

We have already mentioned how, right from the very beginning, there has been a solid connection between Norwegian black metal and ideology. Indeed, it was in the land of the fjords that this mixture initially took place, as part of that process of transition that left behind Venom's *shock rock* provocations to arrive at a significantly more complex and, ultimately, radical vision.

It is impossible to determine with certainty the extent to which this dangerous relationship has been significant in shaping the philosophy that permeated the genre from the beginning, but denying its existence, or reducing it to a mere side effect of the extreme esoteric doctrines in vogue in those years, would be anti-historical. One might also say that these aptitudinal outbursts - because only in rare cases they manifested themselves in graphics and lyrics - slowly went underground, abandoned or hidden from the public. Be it for mere opportunism, or for a real change (of course given the young age of the characters involved, it is not surprising that some have abandoned certain positions once they became older), the fact remains that when black metal - once it left the church burnings and murders behind - reached its peak of popularity, there was no trace of any ideological radicalism, replaced by a Gothic/romantic or typically satanic imagery. At most there would be a mild nationalism coated in patriotic pride, widely tolerated and only a distant memory of the the invectives of the beginning. Even the music, initially born of the merger between the violence of thrash metal filtered through sinister atmospheres, has progressively lost this precious balance by incorporating corny synthetic orchestrations, female backing vocals, and elements of classic heavy metal, triggering an evolution that has departed significantly from the original matrix. The barbaric fury of the early years, along with the peculiar although fragmentary ideological penchants, have slowly disappeared.

In this sense, one may venture to say that part of the original spirit of black metal, the most reactionary and indomitable, allergic to restrictions and angrily "against one and all", has somehow transmigrated into NSBM (interpreted in its wider meaning as extreme music that is not afraid to be uncomfortable or delve into the darkest aspects of history to achieve its goals), and this has further strengthened and radicalized it through the explicit propaganda that filters through the aesthetics and lyrics. It is no coincidence that the interpreters of National Socialist black metal, while remaining connected to the first historical albums that, according to them, were still carriers of certain essential ideological connotations (we are, of course, talking about Burzum, but also the infamous and "Aryan" *Transilvanian Hunger*) no longer identify themselves in the contemporary black metal scene and even mock it, considering it nothing more than a sterile parody of what it once was. "Modern" black metal, the one that has acquired a commercial value, and NSBM are now



*Kaevum's album covers, celebrating a Nordic aesthetic*

genetically incompatible, as they incarnate different principles.

Regarding the Norse lands in particular, the ideological poison remained tied to a season that was consumed in the most reclusive underground and there it was confined, except for few very rare cases. Signals came from as far as Tromsø, where in total geographical isolation two projects were born which, although not classifiable in the most blatant NS vein, operated along that thin line and hearkened back to the forefathers of the Nowegian scene.

We are referring to Nordvrede and its relative side-project called Kaevum, creators of a traditional sound where leaden atmospheres are evoked by subtle melodies that find space in a ferocious Nordic black metal assault. In both bands there is that hint of national-romanticism that, without disregarding a violent aversion to Christianity, stubbornly celebrates the land and its identity, a theme also particularly relevant to the extreme Right:



Krigsrop

*«It seems like people nowadays leave their original homeplace just for no reason. Young people in high school just talk about the places they want to move. Just a few are determined to stay in their local area throughout their lives. In general, people don't have any special feelings for the place they originally came from, and they don't care where their kids are growing up any longer. [...] In general it's not accepted in Norway to take pride in being of Nordic blood, as media projects globalization and mixture of different cultures as a goal for today's society»<sup>2</sup>.*

To understand if an actual NSBM movement has also taken shape, one devoted to Hitler worship and the use of explicit symbols, we must proceed along secondary paths in search of small projects located even further from the light of the sun. Even when digging deep in the most conflicted underground - which often indulges in delirious aesthetic/musical excesses that are transferred on very limited tapes available to the chosen, self-proclaimed militants that are ready for an Aryan revolution within the confines of their neighborhood - Norway proves to be little more than a junction in the rooting process of contemporary NSBM.

For the sake of information, it is worth mentioning the meager legacy of the now defunct Krigsrop, which consists of a full-length boasting the title *The Symbol of Aryan Victory* (2004) and two subsequent EPs filled with laughable black metal, with



non-existent production values and disarming songwriting; with such releases, these warriors of the Reich could only attain the coveted "Aryan victory" by exhaustion of the opponent. More than for the meager artistic merits, the band stands out for its slavish adherence to all the trite clichés of the genre, from the swastikas thrown on the cover, to titles like *Kill Jew*, *As the Ashes of Dead Jews Rises in the Sky*, *Endless March to a New Holocaust*, and the glorification, not so much of the white race, but of the typo in the title of the EP: *At the Dawn of*

*Aryan Wengance*. The now dwindled adventure of Krigsrop is the clearest evidence of how, without the slightest technical prerequisites, it is inevitable that some work sinks in an already quite crowded sea of mediocrity, where everyone tries to stay afloat by only relying on shocking aesthetics.



Putting aside this minor episode, the only exponent of National Socialist black metal boasting an official affiliation to the Pagan Front in the current Norwegian extreme scene, goes by the name of Disiplin. In a decade of activity, the leader, Haakon Nikolas Forwald, has been able to explore the length and breadth of the black metal milieu, moving from the Satanism of the early years to National Socialism, from black metal to noise, from the darkest underground to the big stages during his short militancy in the ranks of the seminal Swedish combo Dissection. His experience is also symptomatic of the difficulties involved in carrying out a music project influenced



by politics within a scene that is no longer relegated to the back and is visible enough to cause concern for the watchful eye of the recording industry: no longer a negligible presence, given the figures that black metal was able to move during the mid-Nineties. Disiplin saw the light in 2000 and soon landed a deal with Moonfog, owned by Satyricon's mastermind Satyr. Their self-titled debut album - featuring artwork which incorporates a poster of Quisling's Nasjonal Samling, devoid of the political symbols - is

stylistically aligned with black metal where more modernist influences occasionally sneak in. This peculiar trait also permeates the following work, *Anti-Life*, which was influenced by obvious death metal reminiscences. Forwald was helped by several musicians during the recordings, both as guests (Faust of Satyricon and Samoth of Emperor on the first album, Nattefrost of Carpathian Forest on the second) and permanent collaborators: among the latter there is the lead singer of Slavia, Jonas Christiansen, who sadly passed away in 2011 due to an incurable disease.

Despite the cover, the first works of the band appear devoid of an ideological substratum, as stated on several occasions by the founder himself. Under pressure from the label<sup>3</sup>, Forwald went so far as to issue an official statement in which he distanced himself from NSBM:



*Poster of the Nasjonal Samling used as a model for the cover of Disiplin's first album*

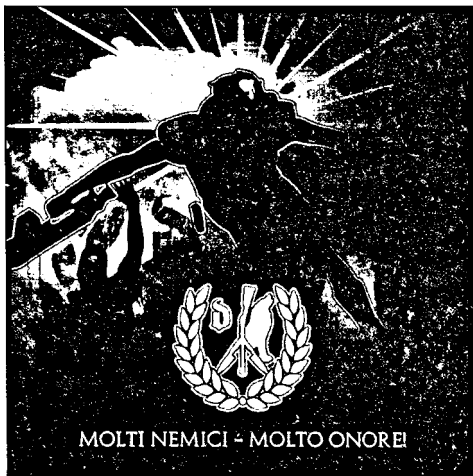
*«Just before the release of Anti-Life (January/February 2005), Disiplin went through some dramatic changes. I, Drakul Azacain (Savant M, General K, Drakul218 etc.) parted ways with the entire line-up of Disiplin. I wanted to take the next step in the evolution of Disiplin, and in order to improve the vessel Disiplin is (for the anti-cosmic and Satanic current), certain actions had to be taken! If chaos, darkness shall once again rule in the so-called "black" metal scene, then some bands have to take a stand! EVERY member must stand behind Disiplin's Satanic message! This message also, hopefully, banishes the ridiculous rumor that Disiplin is a NSBM (racially biased) band. We hate all people equally!»<sup>4</sup>.*

To emphasize the lack of a developed racial consciousness at this stage, the band drew from all possible sources of blasphemy in defiance of Christianity, but in compliance with the unspoken dogmas of good old black metal. Therefore, there are songs such as *Orthodox Devil Worship* (which opens with a sort of invocation in Portuguese) and *Quimbanda*, a term that identifies a religion of African origin that later spread in Brazil, derived from the most popular Macumba. This material will later be disowned, at least conceptually<sup>5</sup>.

The band would therefore seem in line with the trimmings of a gnostic and anti-cosmic Satanism that was quite in vogue in those years, a stance that also seemed to be confirmed by the statement «*Support the anti-cosmic warfare of MLO!*»<sup>6</sup>, where MLO is an acronym for Misanthropic Luciferian Order, a para-satanic cult which included Jon Nödtveidt of Dissection among its most influential members<sup>7</sup>. In recent times, however, Forwald himself, now far from these types of satanic-esoteric circles, drastically downsized his involvement:

*«I have nothing to tell about MLO, except that Disiplin/I have never been a part of MLO. I wrote a statement of support in the booklet of the Anti-Life album, but that is as far as it goes»*<sup>8</sup>.

In truth and hindsight, the statement in support of the MLO, placed as a footnote to *Anti-Life*, seems preparatory to the nth transition that Disiplin were about to face. Shortly after the release of the second studio album, a restless Forwald put his creature into hibernation to join the reformed Dissection as a bassist<sup>9</sup>, accompanying them for a long series of live dates around the world. Putting aside the brief stint at the court of Nödtveidt, Forwald restored Disiplin, but it was immediately clear that something had changed. The retrospective CD titled *Molti Nemici - Molto Onore* was the first sign of a



change of views not only in terms of music, but also of ideology, with the Satanism of the early years giving way to a radical political conception. This transformation seemed to harken back to certain events that occurred in the musician's personal life:

*«Lyrically and visually the band has evolved into NSBM. I awoke from slumber after I became a father, and this is reflected in Disiplin. Disiplin now has meaning and a purpose. Not just entertainment [...] The disease is spreading. I moved back to my childhood "city" many years ago, and I am happy I did. I do not want my kids to grow up in a multi-cultural hell»*<sup>10</sup>.

The album *Hostis Humani Generis* was the first offering from this new course. It violently shakes off the past and makes a clean sweep of the illustrious collaborations; once again, the (artistic) path of National Socialist black metal proves to be a lonely road. Forced into isolation and no longer aligned with their original scene, Disiplin forged new alliances that culminated in their affiliation with the Pagan Front, with full adherence to its ideals. Forwald's new vision of the world is now based on the writings of some



*Weltenfeind of Disziplin*

characters that have already been mentioned (Julius Evola, Savitri Devi, Miguel Serrano, Nietzsche, Spengler), influences that converge and take full shape in the next record, *Radikale Randgruppe*. From Weltenfeind's sound forge, another of Forwald's pseudonyms (now alone in command), erupts a corrosive amalgam of sounds that does not hide behind ambiguous quotes: *Me Ne Frego*, *Soldier of the Black Sun*, and *White Earth* are some of the titles that make up this work and find an appropriate equivalent in the aesthetics department, lining up quotes by Adolf Hitler, Miguel Serrano, and Savitri Devi without any kind of hesitation, along with an excerpt from an old article/manifesto by Hendrik Möbus about NSBM:

*«The NSBM is a refined tool of agitation and propaganda. It is only now that music does not longer serve any petty purpose such as entertainment, but is employed in an effort to compel the audience to take action. NSBM is a call to arms! [...] The NSBM activist is deliberately striking at will, in the full awareness of cause and effect. As rightly comprehended National Socialism is the supreme synthesis of Aryan archetypes and Aryan awareness, the NSBM is the equally supreme synthesis of revolutionary zeal and radical philosophy. It is NSBM that marks the logical conclusion of a movement set in motion by A Blaze in the Northern Sky ten years ago.*

*Those who perceive NSBM as just another "music-genre" know nothing of it. NSBM is the audible quintessence of the born again National Socialism, and as such dramatically opposed to any definition that ignores the archetypal roots of black metal»<sup>11</sup>.*

Due to the politically incorrect proposal (to use a veiled euphemism) both in terms of music and themes, the record immediately encountered many difficulties. As it turned out, even approaching the usual promotional channels, who were on one hand interested in a name that had an excellent catalog, but on the other reluctant to give space to statements that were anything but moderate, became difficult. The zenith of this tension between the band and the printed media (as we have said, a recurring issue when it comes to NSBM) was achieved when the well-known British underground magazine *Zero Tolerance*, considered by many the least submissive to the dictates of political correctness and the most inclined to give space to non-aligned bands, refused to publish an interview with *Weltenfeind*. The interview was then released by the band and the label (the Italian ATMF) through alternative channels.

Beyond strictly musical matters, the interview contains a clear message about the band's current philosophy, which goes from supporting extremist groups such as the Greek Golden Dawn to what had already been expressed by Möbus in the above writing - namely that black metal is not mere entertainment, but rather the vehicle of the spirit of revolt that does not dwell in today's commercial scene, but in its harsher offshoot, which is NSBM.

*«Disiplin is NSBM. [...] National Socialism is far more than just a political ideology. For me National Socialism goes hand in hand with Ariosophy. A worldview, a way of life, a religion, and a search and struggle for the Aryan/noble to transcend and break his limitations and chains, and usher in the new golden age.*

*My agenda with Disiplin is simple. Inspiration and fuel to the few noble left in this world, to not lose hope and stand tall in defiance against the crumbling and decadent modern world.<sup>12</sup>*



The path of Disiplin is hardly matched in the Scandinavian scene. Starting out with the favor of the public and critics, along with Moonfog's strong support (which in those years was held in high esteem), they slowly descended the staircase from the upper floors of a golden black metal scene, although now devoid of rebellious momentum, to seek refuge in the darkest lair of extreme music.



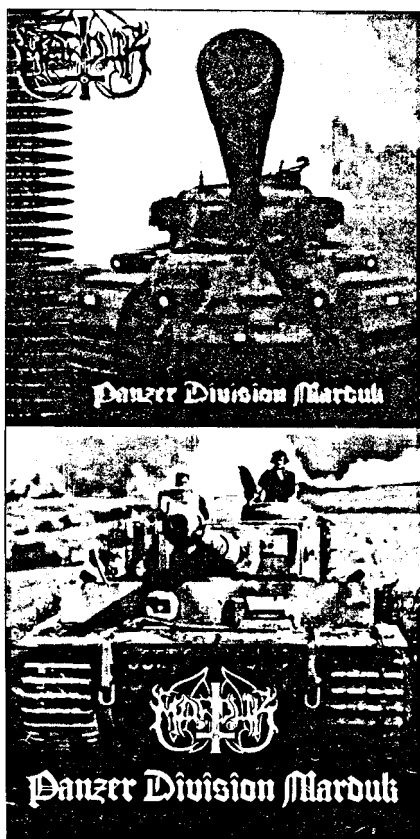
Apart from Weltenfeind's creature, it can be said that Norway, home of black metal and the detonator of the explosion of the phenomenon on a global scale, has maintained - except for a few isolated cases - a certain fidelity to the original satanic trappings over the years, relegating the excesses of the early days to the past, without indulging in ideological tendencies that are indigestible to the market. It is in neighboring Sweden instead, that although initially illuminated by reflected light, we find some peculiar conditions that guarantee the proliferation of unexpected alliances.

## Sweden

Unlike what we have seen while dealing with the Norwegian music underground, Sweden has not only played a crucial role in the development of extreme metal, beginning with death and black, but has also been a breeding ground for some situations connected to the white power movement that found fertile ground on which to proliferate, to the point of assuming importance, in terms of structure and organization, at an international level. The peculiar internal dynamics of this scene shall be discussed in detail later, for now it suffices to say that some record labels founded by circles of the radical Right - Nordland Records and Ragnarock Records in particular - embarked on a path that led them to become real bridgeheads in the process of approach that found representatives of the skinhead scene discovering new artistic havens in heavy metal. In the specific case of Sweden, these types of hybrid realities were essential in order to define a gray area in which projects dedicated to NSBM were able to take root and spread (along with bands that chose to convey the neo-Nazi message through more classic metal sounds, be they death, gothic or other branches), as they could only find their niche through alternative circles, in a particularly crowded Swedish extreme music scene that was obviously reluctant to make room for non-aligned projects with a highly controversial ideological background.

In terms of more traditional and non-politicized black metal, which certainly has an exponentially larger audience and visibility, bands of a certain stature clearly reject the idea that National Socialism and extreme metal can coexist - each time reclaiming the satanic, anti-human or individualistic matrix of black metal and rejecting any nationalist or political theorem associated with music. The fierce opposition to this union is generally supported by the thesis that politics is something trivial and too earthbound to adapt to the satanic philosophy, which traditionally represents the conceptual foundation of the genre. Jon Nödtveidt, a prominent figure of the Swedish black/death underground and the late leader of Dissection, thus expressed himself regarding the growing phenomenon of NSBM:

*«Just belonging to a certain nationality will never make you superhuman. Simple racism or nationalism is nothing but just another herd-mentality for feeble-minded humans to, without*



The cover of Panzer Division Marduk's first press (above) and the reissue with the picture of a German Tiger tank (below)

logical reason, make themselves feel superior to each other in all their confusion, without having to accomplish anything at all but just being the mentally passive, easily-guided apathetic flocks of cattle that they are!»<sup>13</sup>.

Emperor Magus Caligula, lead singer of Dark Funeral, is also openly critical. In an interview with Reality Check TV, he declared himself opposed to any form of political interference within black metal, emphasizing its purely satanic nature: with a sort of call to arms aimed at all Satanists, regardless of color and race, he underlined the importance of uniting against Christianity and other pre-established religions, the real cancer of society. Expression of these ideas helps to place Dark Funeral far from the Nazi ideology.

Occasionally, some bands decide to challenge the unspoken dictates of the market and, venturing on the stormy seas of political incorrectness, end up being victimized even without blatantly embracing radical stances. Marduk, whose leader Morgan Håkansson has never hidden a certain fascination with World War II, earning the band more than a headache, is among the leading names of the Swedish extreme metal scene that have paid the price for daring too much. The first problems arose during the Winter War tour in 1995, when the German dates were systematically boycotted by well-known music magazines due to certain statements made by the band's leader. Here is how Håkansson himself sums up what happened:

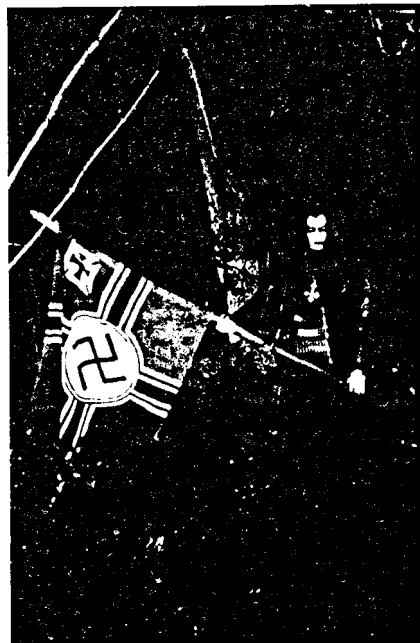
*«We will probably have a few days off; in Germany, where magazines as Rock Hard and Metal Hammer have decided that we are a Fascistic band and refuse to print any ads with Marduk, spread/fax messages to local promoters and try to make them boycott us: The reason for this is that in a German magazine I said that we in Marduk want to prevent immigration to Sweden and that I was proud over the fact that my grandfather was a serving German officer during the second World War»<sup>14</sup>.*

A few years later, the name Marduk would even appear in the second issue of the American NSBM fanzine Hatemonger: «Marduk stands for Germanic heritage» is the

title that stands above a short paragraph which incorporates excerpts of an interview (published in the American magazine *Worm Gear*) in which Håkansson lashes against a music establishment that is always ready to condemn even the purely aesthetic use of Right-wing iconography, while at the same time praising Left-wing bands. A large NSBM following hastily adopted Marduk among their ranks because of such statements, regardless of the band's denials. Clearly, for many of them the old adage: «*The enemy of my enemy is my friend*» does matter.

This interest in the Second World War found full expression in one of the most famous records spawned by the Norrköping quartet: *Panzer Division Marduk*<sup>15</sup>. The album is a furious assault, thirty minutes of relentless violence, which earned the epithet “the *Reign in Blood* of black metal”. A work that has carved itself a place of honor in the history of the genre, but dragged behind it a trail of controversy because of the topics it covered: the incendiary mixture of anti-Christian proclamations and the explicit war setting did not go unnoticed, again raising doubts about the band's political orientation. Some singled it out as the album that marks the Swedish combo's blatant adhesion to NSBM, but it is actually a concept with a historical theme, focusing on the events of World War II but devoid of blatant advocacy or that racial/conceptual substrate found in National Socialist black metal. So basically, if Marduk have to be accused of anything, they are definitely warmongers, but probably not Nazis.

Näströnd, active since 1993 and the authors of authentic classics like *Toteslaut* and *Age of Fire*, are more averse to the limelight, but not negligible in their approach to radical philosophies and extreme metal. Although firmly anchored to satanic orthodoxy, it is also possible to find some points of contact with the cultural background of NSBM in their work. The band has openly expressed some interest in the occult connotations of Nazism<sup>16</sup>, especially regarding the attempt to restore a form of paganism connected to the legacy of the blood of the German people, snatching it back from Judeo-Christian influence. On a philosophical level there are recurring references to Nietzsche as well as a certain adherence to the principles of the Church of Satan, particularly where LaVeyan ideas reference *Might Is Right* by Ragnar Redbeard. Things go even further with the tribute paid to Sir Oswald Mosley (British politician known for having founded the British Union of Fascists) in the song *Comrades in Struggle*, built around the sampling of his famous eponymous speech in June 1938. Their aesthetic side also shows a tangible fascination



Näströnd

with the Third Reich, as proven by use of the Totenkopf in the band's symbolism, and some old promotional shots depicting their leader, Draugr, holding the classic war flag of the Kriegsmarine (German Navy). Even though they were never the bearers of a strictly ideological message, Nästrond perfectly exemplify the convergence of issues and views that animated the black metal underground in the early Nineties, and because of this, they are still considered pioneers<sup>17</sup> of a genre that had yet to formally see the light.



Sweden does not seem to have room for NSBM, as it is relegated to the back by a series of contingent factors. On one hand, there is an already consolidated black metal scene that seems to reject it completely, impervious - at least officially - to any political infiltration. On the other, there is the massive presence of the Blood & Honour network (whose influence, we shall see, has been central to the development of the Swedish white power movement) that acts as a magnet and catalyst for the identitarian music scene; loyal to the original RAC formula, it does not feel the need to explore new avenues, except in rare cases.

However, despite the difficult conditions, there are some significant episodes that deserve to be mentioned, involving projects that exist in that gray area, bordering between the two movements. Paradoxically, the band most representative of this new direction openly declares itself alien to both the black metal and National Socialist scenes:

*«We really don't have any opinion in particular about this scene, being neither a National Socialist group nor a black metal band. When we first became acquainted with the phenomenon of black metal, this was hardly anything one would associate with National Socialism? And we still feel the same way today. While we can respect people involved in the black metal scene*

*having NS sympathies, combining the aesthetic of the former with the message of the latter is beyond our understanding»<sup>18</sup>.*



*The backcover of the compilation White Death, released on Nordland Records*

The ensemble in question goes by the name of Sigrblot, a combination of *Sigr* ("victory") and *blót* (literally "blood", but also meaning a sacrifice to the gods), which identifies a traditional celebration of the Nordic world, during which the gods are honored in order to obtain favors in future challenges. The band's origins go back to 1996,

when the first demo was delivered to Nordland Records, the international reference point for the distribution of neo-Nazi material in those years. It was not long before the band was offered to participate on one of the first releases to mark a mix of metal and identitarian music, a compilation with the prophetic title *White Death*.

Soon after, the band responded to the call of Tellurian Battlegrounds Productions, a small label, which asked the Swedes to contribute to a compilation dedicated to the ideas and the exploits of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu - founder of the mystical/political movement the Iron Guard. The band, which never denied being inspired by the writings and life of the controversial Romanian leader, decided to participate, and recorded the song *Apocalyptic Vision (Storming Into the Third Millenium)*. The collection, published in 100 copies on cassette, saw the presence of the élite of the NSBM scene from both sides of the ocean (Gontyna Kry, Pantheon, Kataxu, Absurd, Thunderbolt, Godless North, among others), although what is expressed by Sigrblot can be related to NSBM only by embracing a much broader and multi-faceted definition:

*«The concept of Sigrblot is not a political one in regards to mundane social issues. It is one of a spiritual origin which has its foundation in a worldview seen from the standpoint of blood, ancestry and folk soul. As Europeans we find it natural to take interest in the future course of our people and cultural heritage by debating the issue and expressing our opinion on the matter. [...] We do not see ourselves as any kind of prophets, gospel bearers or heralds of the ultimate truth. We describe the world around us as we see it and vent our feelings towards the society we are forced to take part of»<sup>19</sup>.*



*Tribute compilation to Corneliu Codreanu produced by Tellurian Battlegrounds Productions*

However, as we shall see, although it is intended more as a spiritual doctrine than as a legalistic art, it is almost impossible to ignore a political component in the Swedes' productions. Once they defined the essence of the project, the band focused its energies on writing the first album. Three years later, they released *Blodsband (Blood Religion Manifest)*, a display of surgical and violent black metal perfected in every detail and enriched by samples, folk openings and martial inserts. The elaborate graphical layout includes details that are far from the often abused, if not deliberately coarse, iconography of more traditional and provocative NSBM: the cover shows two avenging archangels armed with swords destroying two towers, a biblical representation of the events of September 11, 2001, when two Boeing 767s crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City.

«Perhaps the sentiment we attempted to express through the cover can be best explained by this statement of the Baron Julius Evola: "There is a superior unity in all those who despite all, fight in different parts of the world the same battle, lead the same revolt, and are bearers of the same intangible Tradition. These forces appear to be scattered and isolated in the world, and yet are inexorably connected by a common essence that is meant to preserve the absolute ideal of the Imperium and work for its return". The cover artwork is indeed a portrayal of the strike upon the idols of capitalist globalism; on the United States government and its armed forces»<sup>20</sup>.

If, from an aesthetic point of view, the cover is a rather explicit means to reveal the contents of *Blodsband*, a lot more emerges while listening to the record. The lyrics are far more than trite proclamations and draw inspiration from diverse and controversial authors such as Alfred Rosenberg, Jack London, Savitri Devi, Wulf Sörensen and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. Other names to be added are much debated authors such as Julius Evola, William Pierce and the American professor Kevin MacDonald. A set of somewhat unusual references<sup>21</sup>, so it is not surprising that the lyrics resemble more an essay on man and Western civilization rather than a bunch of phrases to accompany the music, with verses that paint an era of endless chaos and moral and spiritual decadence: according to Sigrblot, the only way to escape a fate of annihilation would



be a reversal of values as opposed to the current declining capitalist system.

Even the racial component, the main topic of much National Socialist black metal, is treated in a manner that is quite different from the usual clichés of classic NSBM:

«We do not scorn individuals solely on the basis of their ethnicity, and we have no problem respecting people of another tribe or race – especially living in their own countries and/or fighting their own battles, which happen to coincide with our own. [...] Even though one



*may meet such individuals of decent character, whose social company can be far preferable to that of your average, soulless European, one can never overlook the demographic catastrophe wrought by the current world order, which represents a serious threat to the biological sustainment of our folk. The Muslims, no matter how alien and strange we may ultimately find them and their culture, are fighting on the side of integral Tradition [...] they carry on the battle between modernity and primordial Tradition»<sup>22</sup>.*

Sigrblot's ultimate opponent is a leveling and alien system of thought that corrupts traditions and values. The United States, seen as the cradle of turbocapitalism under hegemonic Jewish influence (reflecting clear similarities with NSBM's typical ideological background), thus becomes the main target, the Pandora's box from which all evil escaped.

For the band, the only defense is to rediscover a system of values related to the concept of myth and legacy of the people, as thoroughly described in the final track *Sacrament (Blood Religion Part I)*. The song is introduced by a quote<sup>23</sup> taken from *Theozoology*, the book by writer and former monk Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels<sup>24</sup>, considered by many to be an influential figure in the early days of Nazism and among those responsible for the racial and occult erudition of Adolf Hitler. Liebenfels was a controversial personality, advocate of theories bordering on science fiction, capable of uniting atavistic mysticism and technological innovation in an intricate pseudo-religious design which assumes the existence of man-beasts and man-gods races, whose cross-breeding damaged the precious genetic makeup of the latter. The task of the Aryan progeny, the embodiment of good and bearer of order, would be to carry out a purifying crusade against all the dark-skinned races, Mongolian or Mediterranean, that Liebenfels believed to be the incarnation of evil.

The song continues with an audio excerpt cut from one of the many radio documentaries produced by William Cooper, a former soldier turned conspiracy theorist and popular host of *Hour of Time*, an anti-government broadcast that included Timothy McVeigh among its regulars listeners<sup>25</sup>. Coming from a rather radical Christian



*Monk and occultist Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels*

background, he hosted a series of forty-two religious-themed episodes within his daily program, three of which were devoted to the occult history of Nazism, an ideology that Cooper did not admire. The audio samples in Sigrblot's song, however, are appropriately de-contextualised to blend with their thesis: the need for a rediscovery of the legacy of the race, declared in the last verse through a free adaptation of Alfred Rosenberg's words.

*«Today this inner voice demands fulfillment of the myth of ancestry and soul. Conquest of mind – race and ego. Triumph of will – blood and honour! These virtues must reign alone and uncompromisingly – They must carry and determine the whole of life. The myth of Europa demands that these dead heroes have not fallen in vain. It is no longer detracted by peripheral values alongside it. The personalities must close around the centre of the folk and race soul. It demands a worldwide revolution»<sup>26</sup>.*

Originally released by the compatriot Nordiska Förlaget, the album was later re-issued on CD by the German label World Terror Committee in 2009, and on vinyl by the American label The Ajna Offensive. The first digital release of the album ends with a cover of the Australian RAC band Fortress (*Commie Scum*), which hides, after a few minutes of silence, a dissonant ghost track balanced between black and doom atmospheres, opened with some words spoken by Savitri Devi, taken from a series of recordings that were commissioned in 1978 by revisionist German publisher Ernst Zündel<sup>27</sup>.



Five years after their debut, Sigrblot came back with *Weltenfeind*, a release that affirmed them as the third vertex of a lethal triad. Scheduled for release on August 10, 2008, exactly on Tisha Beav – a day of mourning and fasting known as the “saddest in Jewish history”<sup>28</sup> – the album is actually a split in which the Swedes are accompanied by two other heavyweights of the NSBM scene: Absurd and Grand Belial's Key. Presented in a rich packaging designed by Njard (former member of Russian combo Forest), the booklet ends with a special dedication: *«This release is dedicated to those who know by heart that extreme art and extremist opinion are but two sides of the same coin. True black metal is a crime against humanity!»*. Regarding Sigrblot's tracks, the last one, *Kali Yuga Intifada*, stands out: a genuine tribute to Savitri Devi, whose sampled voice recurs several times during the over eight minutes of song, thus sealing what began with the ghost track on the first edition of *Blodsband*.



Sigrblot's experience is unique in itself, both for their technical expertise and the complexity of the issues they deal with (which probably determined the decision to distance themselves from NSBM), and although the band operated in the name of the most radical extremism, they are certainly capable of rivaling the cornerstones of the most revered black metal. However, for an example as unusual as Sigrblot, there are many others who rely on more common and distinguishable stylistic decisions.



In the land that has contributed to the birth of death metal, to the point of christening an entire movement<sup>29</sup>, it was only a matter of time before a band achieved the dangerous fusion between death metal and Nazi ideology. This gap is filled by Triskelon, who had already made their appearance on the aforementioned compilation *White Death* with the song *Ingen Reaktion* taken from their debut *Endast Mörker* (out on Nordland a year before the compilation in question): a concentrate of brutal death metal that leaves behind the famous stylistic trademark made in Sweden to embrace more modern and surgical sounds. A fierce amalgam of sounds obtained by merging classic death metal, a massive dose of groove and some thrash contaminations to create a massive wall of sound on which violent anti-Semitic and anti-capitalist invectives and widely revisionist thesis are carved. The opener *När logn blev Sanning* ("When the lie becomes the truth") leaves no doubt:

«Destroy their lies, burn their books.  
What is right? What is wrong? They decide.  
Truth hurts, truth scares,  
6 million will be 8 million,  
11 million becomes 13 million»

Within a year, the band's last release, *Vrede* came out. In spite of a quick career and works that are not particularly relevant to the history of the genre, this album still deserves to be mentioned, for having carried national socialist themes into the very crowded Swedish death metal scene.

Momentarily steering slightly away from the narrow circle of extreme metal, we find Symphony of Sorrow, who earned some visibility in radical Right circles with two albums released for Resistance Records. Of course, the themes do not differ much from the usual found in the white nationalist scene, but the band engages in modern metal with electronic elements and gothic shades; creating an alchemy of sound that is certainly more accessible to the average listener. With an image that gives a nod to the world of popular music, Symphony of Sorrow represent an attempt to shake off a stale aesthetic that is hardly appreciated, if not openly denigrated, by the media. This serves as proof of how Swedish white nationalism has learned to transcend stylistic dogmas

over the years, aiming to reach potential supporters through different communication styles.

Further notoriety for the band was secured by their attractive vocalist Saga, who also had a well-established solo career that took off thanks to a series of tribute albums to Skrewdriver in which some of Ian Stuart's most famous tracks are revisited as ballads. Although

already very famous in the restricted identitarian scene, a recent act of violence catapulted the singer onto several Scandinavian national newspapers' headlines: on July 22 2011 Anders Behring Breivik, until then an anonymous Norwegian citizen, became the perpetrator of a tragic double terrorist attack, the most severe one ever perpetrated in Norway to date, killing seventy-seven people. As a result of these events, his long and controversial writings became public, and among ideologies of the extreme Right, anti-Islamic tensions, preservation of Christianity and ultra-nationalism, Saga herself is mentioned. This was obviously picked up by more than one newspaper, including Norway's Dagbladet which, dedicated a long article to the Swedish singer a month after the events, topped with a picture of her doing the Roman salute during a concert<sup>30</sup>.

One could speak of the inevitable side effects due to extensive media overexposure. Dangers that in no way affect a small handful of bands whose activity has been limited to a bunch of demos or EPs, mainly distributed in the darkest depths of the underground: Ancient Hatred, Aryan Honour, Haustmyrkr and Wreterdass are the small vanguard of NSBM which, as we said, struggle to find a fertile ground and remain confined in an indefinite limbo. In this context, many projects are created and die in the space of a few tapes, thus becoming little more than archival material for a possible population register.

To encounter projects that have actually gotten some feedback, we need to look back to the bands from the white power scene: some of them have begun to demolish those traditionally immovable stylistic patterns, which are part of the musical DNA of any "classic" band of the extreme Right. This is the case of Fyrdung, who initially advocated a simple and rather obvious RAC, influenced by *vikingarock*<sup>31</sup> sound, but underwent a process



TERRORISTENS MOTIVASJON: Terroristen og massenorderen Anders Behring Breivik hyler den svenske artisten Saga. Foto: Youtube

## Nazi-heltinnens musikk gir Breivik motivasjon

*Dagbladet article about Saga, published shortly after the mass slaughter perpetrated by Anders Breivik*

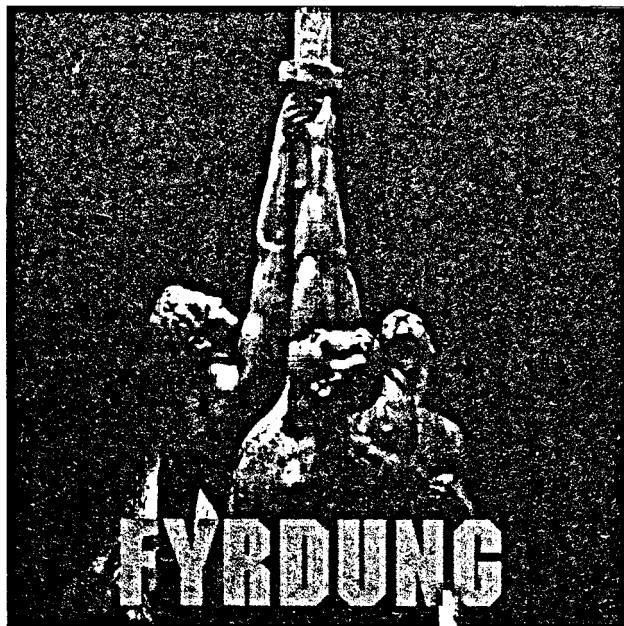


of mutation and evolution towards black and viking metal in the course of the four albums they released before they split-up. The second album, *Ragnarök*, bears the first signs of metamorphosis: the guitars are thicker and the melodies catchier, often lingering in phrasings with an unmistakable metal flavor; only the vocal lines still betray their music legacy, a feature that will remain as a distinctive trait in their later works too, although progressively toned down.

Even if the renewed compositional vein leads the band to shake off the clichés, the lyrics remain firmly adherent to the cultural background of the origins. Songs like *Hans Maikowski* (dedicated to the German soldier<sup>32</sup>) or *1945* unequivocally confirm total devotion to Hitler's regime. This is also evident in the booklet with quotes from two prominent figures of Scandinavian National Socialism: Herman Harris Aall, Norwegian jurist and collaborator of the better-known Vidkun Quisling, and Carl-Ernfrid Carlberg, Swedish gymnast and Olympic gold medalist in 1912, propelled to the headlines for his fervent devotion to National Socialism.

The 2006 album, *Revolution*, confirmed that the band had finally mastered its own skills. The nine tracks on the album demonstrate an enviable ability to drift between black, Viking and death metal influences, fusing the band's innate aggressiveness with melodies of Nordic flavor, all tempered by sporadic RAC overtones. Even the themes are more refined, and the booklet contains an extract from *Die Stimme der Ahnen* ("The voice of the ancestors") by Wulf Sörensen<sup>33</sup>: published in the early Thirties, this work re-interprets one of the most ancient fairy tales of the European tradition, Snow White, from a pagan - and certainly anti-Christian - perspective, comparing the Evil Queen to Roman civilization, which in his opinion, is responsible for the destruction of the righteous and noble spirit of the northern tribes (ie. Snow White) and bent on destroying any opposition in order to be «*the fairest of them all*». Similarly, the Catholic faith imposed by Rome, together with its laws, becomes an element of corruption of the original tribal spirituality, here subdued by a creed in which people can not identify.

Moreover, in *Revolution*, the band dedicates an entire song to the controversial figure of Romanian Corneliu Codreanu, who is exalted as a national hero, staunch opponent of Communism, and as a charismatic leader imprisoned and killed by the corrupt state, which saw in him a threat to the status quo. Codreanu is unique in the pantheon of the extreme Right, and it is curious to note that his mystical and political martyr persona plays an almost mythological role within the most uncompromising troops of NSBM: among the points of convergence there is definitely his strong anti-Semitism, combined with the nationalist impulses and the rigor that animated his Legionary Movement, the Iron Guard; nonetheless, another key element of his thought, christian spirituality<sup>34</sup> is clearly passed over in silence by the followers of a genre that generally aims to eradicate this form of monotheism from the face of the Earth.



The combinations are a little jarring, but they are nothing new, since NSBM often draws from collateral milieux, in a bold attempt to create a system of political and philosophical references, filtering and reshaping men and ideas according to its needs. After all, it is impossible to trace an archetypal figure in the recent past, that fully embodies the spirit that underlies the genre since it, as well as being newly created, is constantly evolving and always influenced by country of origin. The expansion and globalization of the scene paradoxically makes it more difficult to recognize a common "pantheon of heroes", often geographically and ideally distant from each other - except, of course, for Adolf Hitler, the ideological core of the entire movement.

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Fyrdung's last album is titled *Hyperborea*, and it portrays a band now radically devoted to a mixture of black/Viking metal that betrays little of the old sounds - whereas the ideological positions do not seem to have moved an inch. Among the songs on the record, it is worth dwelling on *In Memory of May 1st, 1945*, a mid-tempo piece with dramatic tones and sulphurous atmospheres. The real peculiarity lies in the lyrics, which offer a more dignified style compared to the earlier works of the band and are taken from a manuscript written by Clara Sharland, most likely a pseudonym of Savitri Devi<sup>35</sup> - whose

fervent faith in Nazism is evident in the way she portrayed the scenario of the day after Adolf Hitler's suicide (which occurred on April 30, 1945 in Berlin): drama, decay and smoldering ruins, while the spirit of the Führer returns home, leaving his loyal followers «sunk in anguish deep». From both a musical and ideological perspective, the song can be considered as the ultimate achievement of the Swedish combo's production.

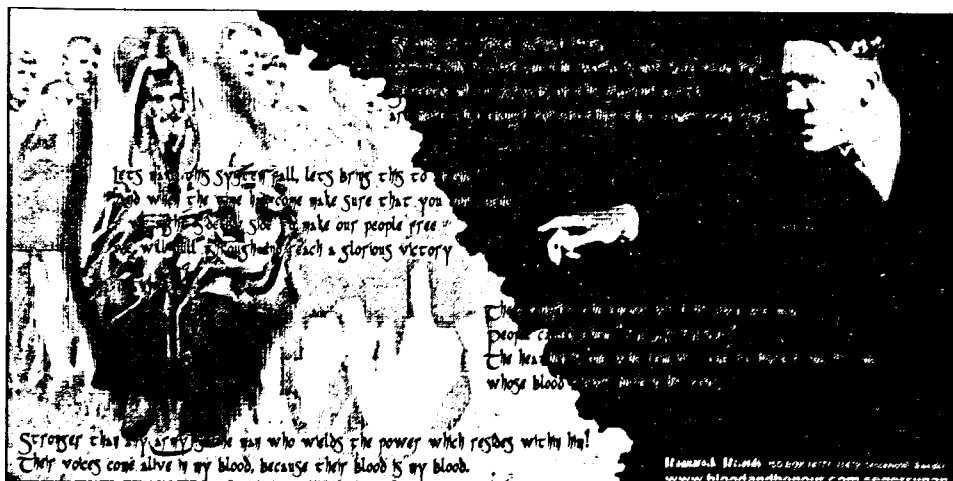


Other projects have emerged from the same scene that gave birth to Fyrdung, though none of them have ever released more than one record. Such is the case with Lykantrop, which released *Violent Behavior* in 2001, delivering little more than thirty minutes of furious black metal touched by the inevitable legacy of death metal for which Sweden is known worldwide. Balanced between mid tempos and sharp assaults, this album saw the light on Ragnarock Records and is probably the closest work to traditional black metal that has ever been produced by members of the Blood & Honour organization.

This partly applies to Havoc as well, authors of a single EP titled *Legion*: five rather derivative songs, diligently aligned with the classic black metal style. Certainly not an essential work, but worth mentioning for an apocalyptic and violent sample that opens the song *Übermensch*:

«One day someone like me is gonna kill you and your whole fucking race!»

The origin of the quote is not so obvious. It is an excerpt of properly de-contextualized dialogue, taken from the movie *Starship Troopers* by Paul Verhoeven (inspired by the controversial novel of the same name by Robert Anson Heinlein), a film set in the distant future in which the human species is threatened by an alien race of giant insects.



The inside of the booklet of *Violent Behavior* by Lykantrop

They are contrasted by humankind led by the Federation, a military government built on the ashes of democracies and promoter of a police state that is impossible to overwhelm, promulgator of a racist society, authoritarian and heavily militarized, where citizenship is not granted by birth but must be earned by serving in the army. Some consider it a simple science fiction film, others a satire of totalitarian regimes, but some closer examinations have also seen it as a subliminal attempt to promote pro-Fascist and xenophobic ideas – perhaps because of the aesthetics inspired by the Third Reich<sup>36</sup>, the glorification of war and the general atmosphere that it evokes. This quote shows how the inclusion of social phenomena combined with extreme ideologies, even if only incidentally, are part of a broader process of establishing a common background of symbols, characters and references in which the sacred and profane merge.

If the part of the Swedish scene that unambiguously falls under the extreme Right adopts an approach devoted to the glorification and exaltation of the “Thousand Year Reich”, there are also more extreme and indecipherable interpretations, which are the result of an uncontrollable fusion of Satanism, Nazism, nihilism and related instances of destruction and apocalypse. In this sense, the activity of the Sons of Satan is glaring, as they embrace Nazi ideology as the ultimate manifestation of the slaughter of the human race, without distinction of any kind. For the Sons of Satan, the National Socialist current is a tool of aggression, not a creed to promote or a doctrine to cultivate, but just



a simple and relentless method of annihilation to glorify. It is seen as an instrument of death and contempt, to bestow liberally as an affront to humanity, according to the trappings of a philosophy devoted to chaos. The band leader himself believes that their concept goes beyond, so to speak, the definition of NSBM:

*«I define it as satanic death metal or SS metal! It's an abyss between fully supporting the Nazis (which I do since I hold their deeds as holy) and being National Socialist. I support their actions not their goals. I*

*support all politics and movements which have as consequences: human genocide and destruction! Personally I for example hate muslim and Islam but I support their terror actions! [...] I was national socialist when I was younger (until I was 17) when I have a more idealized worldview and hoped for some kind of silly future with white people ruling the wasteland after the nuclear war. [...] Also I think most so-called NS metal is shit music! [...] I am first*

*and foremost a Devil worshipper, not a nationalist and certainly not a national socialist. Because it implies that I believe in and hope for a future for my own race and nation. I do not! I hope for the soon and ultimate end for all mankind and all worlds! [...] We fully support Reichführer SS Heinrich Himmler and der Führer Adolf Hitler's great works!!!»<sup>37</sup>.*

Here again, we find a fundamental aspect that has always been a part of the NSBM scene, a dualism that is not always perceived by external observers, but in the end destroys what is erroneously seen by many as a unified movement devoted to a common goal. There has always been a dual approach to National Socialism within the black metal scene, two antithetical schools of thought: on one side is a large group of followers that recognize it as a "bright" force, a lifeline for the white race and a tool for the restoration of a pagan tradition free from Judeo-Christian shackles. On the opposite side is a progeny of black metallers that, in a process of further radicalization of the native satanic concept, have embraced Nazism as the ultimate zenith of absolute evil, a force of the underworld that is able to plunge the world into darkness and guide it toward self-destruction.

Needless to say, the Sons of Satan belong to the second faction. Listening to *In Time of Fire* (an anthology that contains the demos, as well as the EP *Our Visions of a Holocaust to Be*), licensed by the American label Vinland Winds Records, we are faced with typically aggressive black metal with no frills or particularly noteworthy stylistic formulas, with the song titles constantly referring to Nazism and permeated by an aura of uncompromising blasphemy. As evidence of this, the lyrics are quickly transformed into a coarse overview of brutality, in which infernal flames and the fires of insatiable crematoriums become part of an exacerbating exaltation of destruction.

The pompous as well as idiotic war names chosen by the various musicians involved in the band ("Birkenau Overlord Angel Incinerator" on bass, "Pogrom Blitzkrieg Stormtrooper" on vocals, "Panzerfaust Benidictus Ultima 13" on drums...), together with the crazy lyrics, make up Sons of Satan's signature style, a manifestation of their peculiar Nazi-satanic mix which is a tribute to radical misanthropy, where the 666 finds its natural exponential function in the reviled 88.

However, flirting with certain issues is not without consequences. As a hereditary disease, the NSBM brand goes beyond intentions and proclamations and affects everything in its path. Therefore Sons of Satan's Nazi assault both serious and humorous, extends its shadow to the activities of Bestial Mockery, the mother band that spawned this grotesque side project. Active since the mid-Nineties and promoters of a raw thrash/black style, Bestial Mockery broadly share Sons of Satan's nihilistic extremism, albeit stripped of the belligerent iconography and the political substrate. Nevertheless, the accusation of being Nazi sympathizers soon fell upon them. Their participation in the infamous compilation *Burning Roots - Volume One: Compilation Against National Socialist Black Metal*, removed every doubt about their consistent and concrete political affiliation, but did not completely reset the debates on their inconvenient precedents.

In the Internet era, rumours are easily spread but they are harder to silence, so lead singer Master Motorsåg was forced to repeatedly reiterate his band's position during interviews:

*«First of all, let's make one thing clear. Bestial Mockery is a Satanic band and not a political band. [...] It is not strange to have extreme opinions in black metal since it is the most extreme form of hate music there is. [...] Black metal ain't supposed to be nice. Black metal is war! [...] We worship the Devil and all that is evil!»<sup>38</sup>.*

What has been said thus far shows how multiple currents carrying the National Socialist philosophy flow into the Swedish underground with substantial differences, and how Sweden has developed an NSBM scene which is relatively minor compared to others. A gap largely filled by the various hybrids that have spawned over the years, with bands that are the result of stylistic variations and growing musical interests (the characters involved often lend their work to very different projects) that have influenced an otherwise static identitarian music scene. A situation that makes it difficult to precisely narrow down an NSBM scene, which leaves room for a more complex National Socialist metal movement, devoid of strict stylistic direction and displaying varied ways of approaching to the topic.

## Finland

Compared with the two fellow Scandinavian countries, Finland has often been regarded - with great lightness - as an artistically marginal reality in the ecosystem of Nordic metal. As opposed to the typical sounds of Norwegian black metal, which became unavoidable standards, or the more technical ones of the Swedish school, the land of a thousand lakes' devotion to the extreme has delved into more personal and, in a way, less predictable paths. The prime example of this rejection of the rules is given by the artistic corpus of one of the seminal names of Finnish black metal, Beherit. Celebrated as one of the most fierce and blasphemous entities appearing in Northern Europe, forerunners of many renowned names that would tread the scene in a matter of years, the path of Nuclear Holocaust Vengeance's (aka Marko Laiho) creature has been a wandering journey that started with the essential slaughtering sound of *The Oath of Black Blood* and continued with an inexhaustible will to experiment towards the unusual atmosphere of *Drawing Down the Moon*, before taking a complete turnaround, docking in the sea of tranquility of the following albums, which veered toward dark ambient.

Barathrum and Impaled Nazarene are two other names that have helped to cement the growing Finnish scene which, in the turbulent Nineties, ended up being sucked into one of the many national feuds - in this case, between Norwegians and Finns<sup>39</sup> - that arose



in a period marked by an "all against all" mentality that raged everywhere and was filled with threats and proclamations that, reviewed today, reveal adolescent characteristics often overshadowed by blatant gestures of criminal significance. However, the above-mentioned bands are loose cannons that have made a clean break from dogmas and pre-packed styles, walking their own research path within black metal that, especially for the latter, led them straight into the tunnel of the politically incorrect.



*The Cross Was Not Heavy Enough, the work by John Heartfield used for the graphics of Tol Cormpt Norz Norz Norz*

Although it is hard to fit the sly attitude and Anarchic madness of Mika Luttinen, leader of Impaled Nazarene, within the rigid barriers of a political belief, during a career spanning more than twenty years the band has not failed to encounter problems of various natures and scope, and they are still occasionally referred to as influential - either for the aesthetics or for the sake of provocation without hesitation - in the making of the NSBM scene<sup>40</sup>. A prime example being the graphics used in the booklet of the album *Tol Cormpt Norz Norz Norz*, in which a Nazi soldier roughly screws four metal plates to the cross brought by Christ, transforming it into a crude swastika: the image is certainly powerful, and if decontextualized and stripped of its original meaning seems to take on the traits of virulent Nazi-satanic propaganda. The work, titled *The Cross Was Not Heavy Enough*, implies a rather strong criticism of the Hitler regime, guilty of having co-opted and manipulated a religious belief (although of Jewish origin) in order to achieve its political ends. The author is John Heartfield (1891 - 1968), an artist of socialist extraction adhering to the Dada movement, an opponent of Hitler and pioneer of the use of art as a form of political struggle. An aesthetic choice - which later disappeared in the various reissues of the album - made with the knowledge that it would generate controversy, but behind which there were certainly not propagandist intentions.

Impaled Nazarene were accused of such a nationalist attitude that sometimes resulted in Nazism, as with the infamous song *Total War - Winter War* included in *Suomi Finland Perkele*. The track in question quotes the well-known song *Total War* by NON (a pioneering industrial project by the controversial American experimenter Boyd Rice) in the initial drumming and the declaimed lyrics. The other obvious reference is to the famous

speech by Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Reich Propaganda, who at the Berliner Sportpalast in 1943 harangued the crowd by invoking the impetus of the German people towards a *total war*. The drumming introduction gives way to an explosion of black metal, topped by lyrics with tones that are anything but historically subdued, focused on the Winter War fought in Finland.

*«November 1939, eastern front line  
Machine gun fire, defending our pride  
Four months of hell, thousands of bombs fell  
[...]  
Russia beaten up, over 200.000 Communists dead  
If they want a new war, this time will kill them all»<sup>41</sup>*

Further controversies fell upon the band for the song *Zum Kotzen* (from *Latex Cult*, 1996), which speaks of *untermensch* (literally "sub-human", a term also used during the Nazi regime to identify the so-called "inferior populations") and the chorus repeats "1, 2, 3 ... *arbeit macht frei*", quoting the sentence that stood at the entrance of the most famous Nazi concentration camp. It must be said that in the same album there are also songs like *Motörpenis*, *Masterbator* and *I Eat Pussy for Breakfast*, just to reiterate that the band's vocation for bad taste is certainly not based solely on political beliefs.

Interpretations aside, the fact remains that this album ended up under the watchful eye of the aforementioned Bundesprüfstelle für jugendgefährdende Medien - the German federal department that assesses how media can be harmful to young people - which banned it in Germany, a country where several of the band's concerts would be canceled. The latest episode in the long series of disputes that arose around the band concerns the album *Pro Patria Finlandia*, which was accused of conveying ultra-nationalist themes, so that a Finnish newspaper refused to interview the band, branding the album as Fascist. An accusation that Luttinen didn't accept.

*«I mean, hello, look in the dictionary and the difference between a patriot and a nationalist. It is not the same thing. More ridiculously, I am not patriotic! I am not patriotic at all. [...] There is no message we are sending with the title. It is just a title. It is three cool words. That is it. I have seen so many things around the world that I cannot call myself "Right-wing". [...] I am not into politics at all. The answer is no. I would never vote for extreme Right, never. [...] People like to talk shit, especially on the Internet, and they are sure that we have tattoos of Hitler on our asses, but come on...»<sup>42</sup>.*

Impaled Nazarene are therefore inextricably linked to that thin thread of caustic irony traceable throughout their history, along with that punk germ they have never abandoned, and that has always distinguished them. Buckets of black humor dispensed without hesitation, as a result of a transversal approach that shakes off the black metal

\*The Ordi Vuohum  
 \*Venom of the Godz  
 \*Daughter of Sin  
 \*Whereby He Might  
 Do Battle

This demo was recorded at  
 ANAL VOMIT Studios, 16th &  
 18th of November, XXVIII  
 Anno Satanas

Recorded and mixed by  
 Teemu Grönberg and  
 Deabolikal

**CULT FASCISM METAL**

*Scream for War, a detail of the booklet.  
 In the lower part there is the writing  
 Cult Fascism Metal*

orthodoxy made of darkness and forests, to go deal with any subject that proves unpopular with the audience. It is precisely for these reasons that it is impossible to confine them into the NSBM scene (it is often hard to even consider them black metal), without unnecessary stretching.

To find the first incursions into territories with purely political implications and apparently free from an altogether reassuring shock attitude, we have to look to 1993, with the demo *Scream for War* (1993) by Utuk Xul, an obscure combo harbinger of cryptic black metal sometimes soiled by sinister keyboards. If titles like *Venom of the Godz* or *Whereby He Might Do Battle* do not seem to particularly distance themselves from the more traditional connotations of the genre, it is the cryptic wording on the back of the insert that lifts the alert level: «*Cult Fascism Metal*».

Given their short existence, it is unlikely that Utuk Xul have exercised a particular impact on the scene, but even if their "Fascist metal" is nothing more than a historical subtlety useful for archi-

val purposes, this name remains ominously linked to two events that have had a certain importance in the ecosystem of Finnish music. In fact, not everyone knows that Teemu "Somnium" Raimoranta, a founding member of the folk metal band Finntroll (with a past in Thy Serpent, Impaled Nazarene and Barathrum), was one of the guitarists in Utuk Xul. His career ended tragically on March 16, 2003 when, apparently in a drunken state, he fell from the Kasaniemi bridge in Helsinki, dying from serious injuries<sup>43</sup>. Another member of Utuk Xul was the protagonist of one of the most shocking crime stories that occurred in Finland, giving new life to debates on Satanism and its followers, as it happened after the well-known events in Norway. Like a perfect dark thriller, the story begins with the discovery of a mutilated leg in a dumpster in Hyvinkää, a small satellite town of the capital. The investigation led quickly to the young Jarno Elg, a fervent follower of black metal, with a not so clean past and a love for acid fueled Satanism that merged a fascination for evil with copious abuse of alcohol and drugs. On November 21, 1998, Elg and four friends went back to the apartment in a barren suburb where a couple of them lived, and gave a wild party based on black metal<sup>44</sup> and alcohol that degenerated until all inhibitions were gone, and one of



TORSTAINA 12. ELOKUUTA 1999

TÄNÄÄN

ILTA-SANOMAT 9



Kastopalkkamiehen perikijä, hyökkäsalainen Jarno Elg, sai otinlaulun merkistä ja elämänsätyksestä.



Jarmon mukaan jättäjä pelasti, kun Hyökkäsalin Kiertokappelin kastopalkasta löytyi ihmisen jalka. Palkat hämmästyivät kastopalkasta viime marraskuun lopussa.

## Jarno Elg kidutti koiransakin hengiltä

Päätöselumiehen lisäksi Jarno Elg tuomittiin omien lausuntojen mukaan kuoli- aaksi kiduttamasta. Saat- tananpalkkajaksi tunnustai- tunut Elg tappoi jousiva- sa urudenoma sataman- sen kalenterin mukaisena eläimen uhrauspaivana Hälloreena 31. lokakuu- ta viime vuonna.

Elg teipatti koran il- maantietopilla lukkumai- tomaksi ja osi sita kolmesti sakulla kylkeen.

Koraa ei heti kuollut n- kuulin, vaan ei pikan ai- kaa verta pulpan ja ki- vusta ulvoen.

Enaksi Elg oli hakannut koraa metalliputkella paa- han ja pisin selkäranka.

## Valtiolle kallis lasku

Tuomittujen lähes 400 000 markan asiantuntijak- lankeavat vainon ei- v- rommaksien maksetta- vaksi. Päättökä Jarno El- gon osuus on noin 124 000 markkaa.

Tervehongan puolustaminen maksaa val- tiolle 137 000 markkaa ja Mika Rikan 113 000 markkaa.

Finnish newspaper article on the Jarno Elg affair

them became the target of a macabre ritual consisting of torture, brutality and humiliations of various kind, which culminated with the guys's death<sup>45</sup>. The victim that met such a tragic end was, in fact, Utuk Xul's other guitarist.

Less ambiguous, and with unmistakable intentions is Dysangelium's short career - from Kotka, less than 100 kilometers from the Russian border - as they are probably the first Finnish band to reveal blatant references to Nazi ideology. Simply titled *Demo 1* and released in 1995, the band's debut places a picture depicting German soldiers holding up a banner of the Reich on the cover, and on the side flap, two swastikas with the words «White Power» in the middle. The next work, imaginatively titled *Demo 2*, delivers songs with all too obvious titles such as *White Resistance*, *Legion Totenkopf* and *20. IV 1889 - 1997 (Memory to A. Hitler)*. Inextricably bound to Dysangelium is the equally swift appearance of Pervogoat, with *Face of Death* (1996), who align themselves with more typical black metal, both in terms of sound and themes, but leave aside a blatantly Nazi aesthetic and take refuge behind a more prosaic «True Aryan Black Metal», as clearly shown in the insert of the cassette.



As always, it is in the warm belly of the underground, away from prying eyes, that the most disturbing combinations take shape. If the above-mentioned bands were relegated to the shadows until they disappeared, names with quite a different resonance have not failed to take up the baton. In fact, the Finnish extreme metal scene has grown in a very particular context, almost untouched; the interference of an increasingly greedy record industry were felt here as well, but overall the boom that hit the Swedish and Norwegian cousins gathered less proselytes than expected. Totally rejecting compromise, the Finnish scene has paid the price (in terms of sales and popularity) over the years, of not aligning to musical and aesthetic parameters that could guarantee a free pass toward the golden shores of commercial black metal. In a very peculiar way, some bands - who have since acquired international significance - have felt the urge to bring watered-down black metal towards intransigence and danger (at least verbal) in line with the past.

Clandestine Blaze, Satanic Warmaster and Goatmoon are probably the three main names of this horde that had no scruples in turning the knife in the wounds of Europe, and whose musical efforts balance on that elusive line between classic black metal and NSBM. It is difficult to identify a National Socialist black metal scene in Finland since, except for some particular cases that seem to follow certain typical aesthetic and stylistic elements, most of the bands maintain a strong bond with Satanism and the themes closely related to it, using issues such as anti-Zionism or the exaltation of Nordic heritage as a factor in further contrast to Christianity and its roots. In this case, it would be more correct to speak of a radical black metal scene, which has no problem with approaching uncomfortable themes or philosophies belonging to the same ideological background upon which National Socialism lies, without joining a structured political and social matrix of Nazi origin.

Proceeding in chronological order, it is Clandestine Blaze who received the burden to uncover Pandora's box and delve into black metal's most dangerous themes. Mikko Aspa, a leading character of the Finnish underground and multi-talented and tireless artist, is the sole man in charge of this creature. He is active in a variety of projects ranging from power electronics to porn-grind and owner of two labels: Northern Heritage devoted to extreme metal and



Freak Animal for noise/power electronics and assorted electronic degenerations. His relevant past history in the industrial scene, where the politically correct is banned by definition, may have facilitated the adoption of topics otherwise not so common within extreme metal, but in Clandestine Blaze they are not just material for aseptic shock tactics like those practiced by Impaled Nazarene a few years earlier. In fact, the theoretical framework is based on the conceptual pillars of anti-Christianity, but it is devoid of hesitation when it comes to crossing certain borders: for starters, the song *Tearing Down Jerusalem* finds space on the EP *On the Mission* (1999), characterized by a lyrical approach that goes beyond the usual attacks against the Christian cult. The lyrics contain clear invectives against Jewish power, echoed in the slogan «*Eliminate the Zionist cancer! Destroy Israel!*» printed in the insert of the vinyl. The topic also returns on the following album *Night of the Unholy Flames*, on the track *Chambers*, in which the band reaches a more complete sound dimension with black metal made up of simple rhythms and hypnotic, circular riffing, while maintaining the barbaric violence that is characteristic of the genre.

*«Living flesh on the row  
Heading towards certain death  
Chambers full of Zyklon-B  
Ready for mass extermination*

*Sheep without will to fight  
Illusion of salvation  
They have submit to the destiny  
Holocaust of the weak*

*Gas among the people  
Exposes true raw nature  
Sacred beliefs forgotten  
Bestial side of man revealed*

*In chambers full of Zyklon-B  
Christians cry for Jesus  
In chambers full of Zyklon-B  
Jews cry for god»<sup>46</sup>*

The most obvious reading of such crude lyrics refers to the massacre of the Jews that took place in the gas chambers of the concentration camps (where Zyklon-B was the chemical agent in use). However, Aspa provides his own interpretation that goes beyond the dreadful historical reality, which becomes a brutal metaphor to describe the true nature of man:

«The song Chambers does not talk about the past, but it's statement for the future. But it includes influences from past too. Look at second verse, it tells about the fact that most people just submit to this. They dig their own graves, they help the enemy. While they know they will be executed, instead of showing last resistance and either get killed or break free, they choose only to get killed and even help enemy to do it. Groups of people can easily run over one or more armed men, but if people just don't try to change their position, only follow orders and submit



quietly, don't they deserve what they get? Third verse talks about the fact that when chambers are filled with gas, people sure won't be nice and full of religious brotherly love. They'll rage and try to find clean air to breath, climb over each other to get oxygen from higher (even if it's not there), violently crush other people to survive themselves. It takes this long to reveal true nature of humans that they have artificially tried to hide. But it is too late then»<sup>47</sup>.

In spite of much criticism over the years, Clandestine Blaze were rarely associated with the NSBM front, perhaps because of a strong sense of individualism that is not inclined towards the pre-established dogmas of a radical political doctrine. In spite of this, themes such as anti-Zionism, seen as a direct result of anti-Christianity, will return many times in different forms. Take for example *Fist of the Northern Destroyer*, from the eponymous 2002 album, or *Ashes of the Eternal Wanderer* from *Church of Atrocity* (2006), which address the matter from slightly different perspectives but always focus on the "alien" influence of monotheistic religions.

The theme of the war on Judeo-Christianity is not the only one to find space in the work of Clandestine Blaze. Consider the album *Deliverers of Faith*, whose cover seems to portray a normal church service, although, on closer inspection, the seven figures on stage are far from men of God. The heads of the priests have been replaced by those of some famous serial killers (Albert Fish, Ian Brady, John Wayne Gacy, Marc Dutroux, Jammu Siltavuori) and two characters that have become fatefully iconic in the history of the extreme Right: Timothy McVeigh, the infamous perpetrator of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and Klaus Barbie, known to history as the "Executioner of Lyon" for the barbaric ways and torture methods that he employed to weaken the French resistance during the years between 1942 and 1944, when he was head of the Gestapo in the transalpine city.



*The "bringers of faith" portrayed in the inner graphics of Deliverers of Faith*

Serial killers, terrorists, Nazi veterans and black metal make for a lethal explosive mixture, which is not particularly common, but in this case, a political stance does not necessarily lurk behind the choice of these characters: since in their own way, these figures are a manifestation of a dark and ill *will to power* which is recurrent in the band's work, and they are all historically relevant to describe the dark side of modern times.

A last gasp hidden between the lines, that gives rise to further suspicion as to Clandestine Blaze's actual adherence to certain subjects, is contained in the full-length *Falling Monuments* (2010): in *Possession of Nordic Blood*, a square example of rhythmic black metal with Darkthrone-esque elements, a fairly typical subject for Scandinavian bands is dealt with: the legacy and lineage of Nordic blood.

*«Looking the world through possession of the Nordic blood  
Fuelled by nectar of possession  
Ready to fight with fury  
World calls for submission and change  
Nordic blood retreats nowhere»<sup>48</sup>*

The final part of the lyrics are repeated several times, like a mantra, as the song reaches the end; but actually, in contrast with what is printed in the booklet, the last sentence becomes *«Aryan blood retreats nowhere»*, a testimony to the fact that in the black metal context of the band, certain ideological subjects are seamlessly placed alongside more traditional topics for the genre.

In light of this digression, Clandestine Blaze remains an elusive creature. Although the politically incorrect definitely finds its place here - among misanthropy, perversion,



anti Judeo-Christian invectives, mixed with radical anti-Zionism and general disdain for the human race - and although Aspa can definitely not be considered a Left-wing man, the band is still not easy to categorize. There are clearly multiple references and points of contact with the philosophical background from which National Socialism emerged, but some concepts that belonged (not exclusively, keep in mind) to Hitler's political doctrine are extrapolated and reshaped here on the basis of new possibilities of the millennium, with a liberty that appears to underlie no strict party affiliation. Indeed, this eclectic wiggling out of multiple manifestations of extremism is a further demonstration of the collusion between black metal, inconvenient issues and radical ideas that have found ways to live in Finland, and proliferate in a scene that seems unafraid of the presence of unorthodox bands.



Likely even more popular than Clandestine Blaze, is the one-man band Satanic Warmaster<sup>49</sup> led by Satanic Tyrant Werwolf. This prominent figure in the Finnish underground was previously a member of Horna and is currently a hyperactive agitator of extreme music with an unknown number of collaborations and side-projects. The 2001 debut, *Strength & Honour*, is a solid black metal album with dark colors and obscure landscapes, played with high speed and catchy melodies. Oblivious to any taboos, the cover itself, with its solemn tones, indicates that the Satanism they flaunt will be accompanied by a sound dose of politically incorrect material, and songs like *Wolves of Blood and Iron* or the title track amply confirm this:

*«Reign of tyranny, of magick and strength  
Enthroned Aryan spirit the resurrection of our Reich  
Valour of pagan Europe  
War and warrior's blood  
We know that our destiny lies in the forgotten stars...»<sup>50</sup>*

From here on, the band's career is full of releases, split albums and EPs in perfect compliance with their proudly paraded underground status. However, the project's reputation grew steadily, both because of the appreciated quality of their work - making them one of the most prominent bands of the new millennium in the Finnish scene - and the intransigence and the ambiguity of the artistic proposal.

Over the years, the release of one collaboration after another (with Gestapo 666, Totenburg and Aryan Blood in particular) further contributes to provide an easy pretext for an ideological framing of Satanic Tyrant Werwolf's work, although he has always reiterated that the primary essence of Satanic Warmaster is to be found in Satanism. After all, an ideological inclination distant from the progressive is pretty obvious, not so much in terms of a declared political stance or through the use of old symbols, but rather as



a consequence of that set of radical philosophies that are considered essential by the promoters of certain black metal: elitism, social Darwinism, superman theories, and the rejection of monotheist dogmas. In this sense, the use of National Socialism as a synthesis of the above-mentioned is almost inevitable, and it is not even denied by Satanic Tyrant Werwolf himself:

*«The influence cannot be denied, some of the most advanced social and political ideas were created during the*

*iron regime of the Reich. Of course I am interested and feel strong sympathy for the ideals of that time. To speak about the empire of the Antichrist is not total rubbish either»<sup>51</sup>.*

In 2005, one of the most celebrated albums of this Finnish band came out: *Carelian Satanist Madness*, which threw further fuel on the fire. If the aesthetics continue to adhere to the basis of the genre (simply look at the album cover), the lyrics focused on Satanism are complemented by others that are much more ambiguous, and in particular *My Dreams of 8* seems to bear a clear reference to Adolf Hitler<sup>52</sup> as a concrete manifestation of that influence mentioned earlier:



*«The man against time, in scorn against decline  
One state, one folk, one leader, a true revelation  
The purest essence of the cult of our blood  
For infinity, flowing inside me... Forever  
binding me...»<sup>53</sup>*

Despite the constant nods and obvious fascination for the fallen Reich, the work was well received everywhere, and from a musical point of view it remains one of the band's best efforts. However, with the lesson of increased attention, in terms of audience and critics, there have

been diplomatic incidents following Satanic Warmaster - that seem almost inevitable when a band with such an improper profile reaches a certain mainstream market.



Satanic Warmaster

As we have seen in a previous chapter, the name of the band made the rounds of the local media in 2008 when the mini-festival Carelian Pagan Madness Tour was announced, with Goatmoon and Satanic Warmaster opening for two heavyweights of NSBM: Absurd and Der Stürmer. But if back then, everything worked out for the best despite the alarm raised by the media, thanks to a convergence of ideas obviously shared by all the participants, a few years later, external pressures would prove insurmountable, causing the participation of the band in a major international festival to fall through. The case erupted at the 2011 edition of Hellfest, a festival that takes place annually in Clisson, France, where Satanic Warmaster were invited to play due to overwhelming demand. What happened next is the result of a succession of press releases and rumors, but to sum it up, it turned out that several other bands already confirmed to play at the festival urged the organizers to remove the Finnish group, as they were considered out of line with the spirit of the festival, and also because of their political stance. The band was taken off the bill, triggering these comments from Satanic Tyrant Werwolf:

*«It has been brought to my attention, that the organizers of the festival cannot hold on to our agreement to have Satanic Warmaster perform at the 2011 Hellfest. This was because of pressure put to the organizers by other artists booked on the festival.*

*It is a disappointment (despite being totally expected) to see such mentality still present in the "individualist" and "free-thinking" metal community that any musical act can still be boycotted because of false preconceptions and arbitrary political motivations of other, "bigger" artists. It*

is also more than amusing to see that the censorship and boycott some of the French authorities tried to push on the festival earlier are now exercised by the festival organization itself.

Obviously because I have never upheld any modern taboos or lived my life as an apologetic dabbler, it makes me also a target for politically motivated artists to keep us from playing because of their self-righteous reasons. Any artist can be put on a mock trial by taking words out of their context without thinking of the actual message, and Satanic Warmaster once again hangs crucified by hysterics driven by the love for a world and values I feel no oneness with.

Everyone who has even slightest interest in this musical style knows what black metal is about, and in that light only a moralist or someone with a very extreme double standard can say that Satanic Warmaster is in some manner different from other artists of the genre. It makes me want to puke for making a statement like this, which is almost something that a politician would do, but to clear some things, it was mandatory to bite the bullet this time.

Just to make sure everyone has their labels right, Satanic Warmaster's ideology is Satanism and music style black metal. Whoever claims otherwise does so only because of personal feelings and/or resentment»<sup>54</sup>.

Despite the vast repertoire of material that shows explicit links to NSBM, the band has never made these topics the core of its work, but rather exposes them as the expression of an uncompromising philosophy, in search of new elements capable of striking the collective imagination and replacing the now obsolete «Hail Satan»<sup>55</sup>. Asked the about possible foundations of an alleged "Nazi-satanic" philosophy, the Finnish musician returned to the topic:

«I have never had the need to label myself Nazi/NS or whatever, keep that in mind. Things that connect me with such ideals are for me the most natural things there are for a white man to respect, and due to that obvious apolitical/esoteric approach to the topic, calling myself something like that would be also disrespectful towards those who swear in the name of the movement. I would hardly call any eternal concept of self-ascension, blood, ancestry, honour "my own", because such things have existed and will exist for centuries, way beyond my own person»<sup>56</sup>.

As a reminder of how a bond with certain symbols and the continuous resorting to specific topics is typical of Satanic Tyrant Werwolf, it is worth mentioning two of his

many (and less known) incarnations that have further strengthened a relationship with environments that are normally considered taboo by the black metal establishment. Under the moniker, The True Werwolf, a side project that produced various releases focused mostly on issues such as lycanthropy,



vampirism and Satanism, he has participated in a compilation by the infamous label Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, probably the most prominent symbol of the Nazi-satanic union formed in recent years. Even more controversial, is the only release by Blutrache, a short-term project born at the end of the Nineties, whose legacy is one single cassette titled *Marsch Zu Neuen Zeitaltern*. Starting with the graphic presentation, which includes a Sieg rune placed on the cover and Celtic crosses accompanying the booklet, this release shows a more obvious attraction towards a type of black metal with clear ideological references, celebrated with the axiomatic use of symbols and archetypes that are relevant to the areas of the extreme Right.

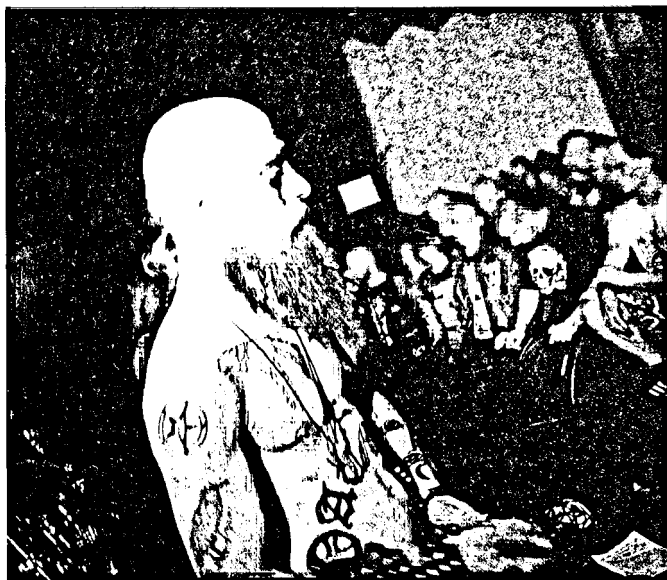
To this day Satanic Warmaster is one of the leading bands of the scene of the far North, and in spite of the problems its leader had to face, he continues to move easily in those gray areas of black metal that make it hard to pigeonhole him. Although he is unquestionably black metal in terms of style and aesthetics, there is a recurrence of political connotations in his works. And if it is difficult to circumscribe his work within the confines of NSBM, it is equally clear that the expressions of esteem received from openly Right-wing bands such as Der Stürmer place the group led by Satanic Tyrant Werwolf under an ambiguous light that is in itself the true signature style of the project.



The third vertex of this hypothetical "triangle of evil" from the land of a thousand lakes is the project of BlackGoat Graveseducator, otherwise known as Goatmoon. After an impressive amount of demos with a distinctly Satanic imprint (although here and there there were titles such as *Fourth Reich* or *Aryan Evil*), the band debuted with *Death Before Dishonour*, a coarse and savage black metal massacre that betrayed a punk legacy and an uncompromising feral attitude. The production was largely deficient, but in the primordial chaos of the record it was already possible to pick some features that would become essential in Goatmoon's subsequent works, which were to become much more refined and inebriated with folk atmospheres. On a conceptual level, however, BlackGoat Graveseducator expresses the radical and elitist matrix of his creature without losing himself in complicated dissertations:



*«Elitism and hate. Support the anti-Christian way of life and white pride worldwide, but if you are white and you are Christian, money hugging Jew, Communist, nigger loving hippie or some other sub human scum FUCK OFF AND DIE. There is only room for white anti-Christian elite»<sup>57</sup>.*



November 2014, Goatmoon live in Italy

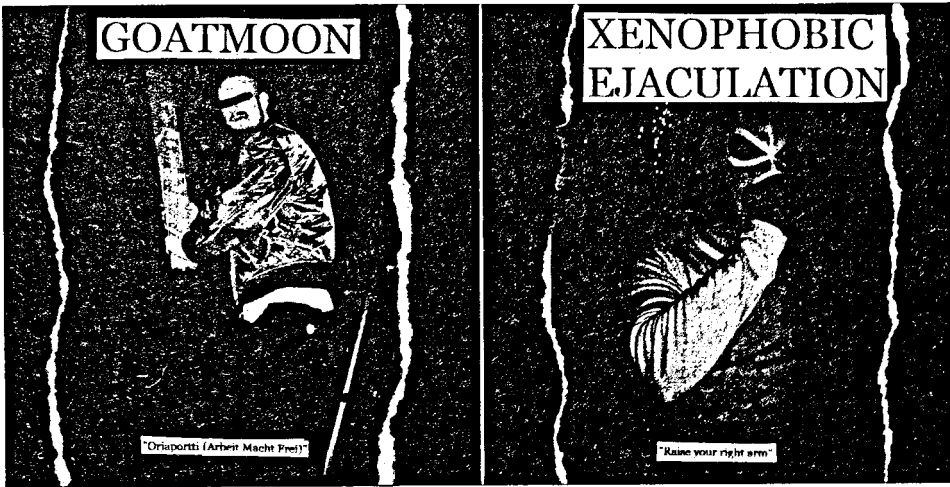
A statement that certainly does not look for ambiguous loopholes or complex philosophical theories to justify a clear and concise vision, which has become the backbone of Goatmoon's ideological path: militant anti-Christianity fueled by a racist attitude that is coupled with the rejection of the logic and morals of the Judeo-Christian creed.

Three years after the debut, *Finnish Steel Storm* reintroduced the band with a sound that

was definitely enriched, but no less brutal, without turning back on the theme front: the booklet full of Celtic crosses and inverted crosses, photos of Hitler and cold and snowy Nordic landscapes: a near-perfect example of what is normally considered NSBM. To confirm the growing importance of the band, Goatmoon took part in the previously mentioned C Karelian Pagan Madness Tour in 2008, which triggered the anxiety of the Finnish media.

In the chaos of smaller productions that follow, it is worth mentioning the 7" split with the terrifying power-electronics racist project Xenophobic Ejaculation, whose song consists of a long and repeated drum pattern crushed by a deadly and minimal web of piercing feedback and a distant voice shouting: «*Lift your right arm/and tell me where you stand*». Goatmoon's side offers the song *Orjaportti (Arbeit Macht Frei)*, a rough and scratchy mixture of black metal with rock'n'roll rhythms, with the first part dominated by the sampling of a German Nazi rally. The collaboration itself is minor, but it once again certifies the peculiarity of the Finnish underground: as we have already documented the convergence between the black metal and skinhead scenes, in this case we can also register a rattly ramification that lands in the realm of extreme electronics, a scene capable of disintegrating every existing taboo. Mikko Aspa's industrial raids, which started well before Clandestine Blaze came to life, are further proof of this; as well as another split 7" shared between Goatmoon and the masters of noise, Bizarre Uproar.

After a split 12" with Lord Satanachia's Azazel, the full-length *Varjot* came out, which completed the stylistic evolution already observed in *Finnish Steel Storm*. The



themes are always the same, but you just have to lift the matte black tray that houses the CD to find a Celtic cross with two inverted crosses placed side by side, as if to summarize Goatmoon's belief. Needless to say, the band is widely considered one of the most shining examples of NSBM to emerge from Finland's extreme underground, with the exaltation of white power and references to the Third Reich echoing black metal's classic themes: Satanism, apocalyptic visions, war and a fascination with wild nature. But although, in this case, the NSBM label is not totally off base, BlackGoat Gravedesecrator takes some distance just the same, though shamelessly claiming certain basic ideas:



*«I do agree with the NS ideology to a certain point, but I am a warrior, not a politic. So Goatmoon is not a NSBM band»<sup>58</sup>.*

Considering these statements and the total absence of justifications or attempts to hide behind the desire to shock the listener, it is safe to assume that this partial distancing from NSBM is mostly the result of a definite lack of interest in the political doctrine itself, while there is obvious and overt harmony between Goatmoon's brutal intransigence with hints of Supremacism and the racial substrate of the National Socialist ideology.



Decidedly less accustomed to the spotlight are the now disbanded White Wolves Kommando, a radical and ferocious combo whose short life took place away from the limelight. Wrapped in a symptomatic mystery, and resistant to any kind of communication with the outside world, their work consists of only four demos (*White Wolves Power*, *Black Metal Resistance*, *Dark Ages Return* and *Our Empire of Shadows*) issued between 2008 and 2012, all in the name of furious and sinister black metal with dissonant tones, an expression of that association between Nazism and Satanism which is the ultimate sum of the NSBM concept. The band perfectly follows the most classic precepts of National Socialist black metal like no one else in Finland: starting with the covers, that are a monothematic triumph of runes, inverted crosses, swastikas and Totenkopf, thus identifying a range of action that can not be misunderstood. Therefore, almost adhering to a predetermined compendium of rules, in between the songs the inevitable German marches such as *Das Hakenkreuz* or *Sieg Heil Victoria! (LSSAH)*<sup>59</sup> find their space. Vintage music revival aside, we are faced with a diverse set of minimal black metal splinters, short in duration and rudimentary in means, uniformed by a cold and lackluster production that leaves no room for frills, except the occasional melodic opening. The first three tapes are cult items in the underground scene, and were later reissued in a collection edited by Satanic Skinhead Propaganda owned by Antichrist Kramer. *Our Empire of Shadows*





presents a few adjustments with production that is barely acceptable, necessary and sufficient to bring out noxious melody lines from intricate and oppressive drum patterns and harrowing vocals.

Hammer are also prone to uncompromising claims; when they debuted with their first demo in 2004, they immediately clarified the direction they intended to take. With a title like *Nazionalsozialist* and a cover which shows a picture of Adolf Hitler, there was no room for any possible allusion: no ambiguity, but rather a clear declaration of anti-Semitic war broken down in four tracks with titles such as *Nuclear War Against Israel*. This stance was reiterated in the Finnish duo's only full-length, the brutal *Shoax*<sup>60</sup>, where Hammer's NSBM maintains a direct, feral and murderous approach, with unambiguously titled songs such as *Kun Palaa Jerusalem* ("When Jerusalem burns").

Momentarily departing from black metal, we find bands in the Finnish underground music ecosystem that are not aligned to the NSBM circle, but are still akin to a certain way of understanding music as a means to convey uncomfortable ideas, that is quite far from being mere entertainment. In this sense, Devilry is definitely a name worthy of some attention. They were formed back in 1998 from the ashes of an embryonic band known as Carnival Diablo. Their first releases are not particularly exciting, as they are characterized by derivative anti-Christian black metal, being the direct result of the scene of that time: songs like *Sodomize the Nazarene* or *Curse the Trinity* reflect their approach, and also pigeonhole them within the usual satanic canon that was particularly in vogue in the Nineties.

However, it is peculiar to observe the slow and inexorable evolution of the project, which spawned a series of demos, EPs and split albums, developing a personal doctrine and aiming their target toward new shores. In the new millennium, Devilry consciously chose to move into areas unrelated to those of a typical black metal band devoted to gratuitous blasphemy. Signs of the new path they chose strongly materialized after the release of the *Muslim Genocide* EP (2006), a real anti-Islamic concept consisting of four acts on 7" vinyl, offering somewhat articulate death/black metal with lyrics that are far from accommodating towards the followers of Allah.

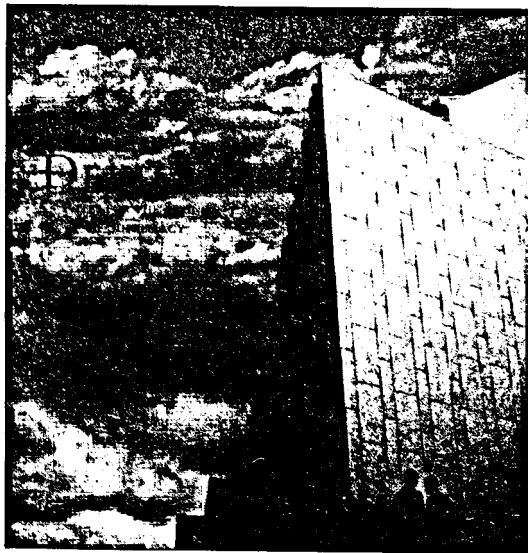
*«Abolish the divine and blessed  
Demented revelations of Mohammed*

*Vomit inducing imposing pompous spires  
Pulverized to the defiled ground  
All-consuming profane decimation lust  
Mosques levelled down to dust»<sup>61</sup>*

Sir Holm, the undisputed frontman of the Finnish band, while being an essentially shy person refractory to the analysis of his beliefs and his actions (*«My personal history is not very important at all. Today, I have no desire to be an active part of any circle per se. I*

*just do what I feel I need or have to do»<sup>62</sup>*), clarifies some aspects related to the idea behind *Muslim Genocide* and his relationship with Islam in general:

*«Islam has an awesome will and invincible spirit, it is in the phase of expansion and conquest. As long as this simple little fact is swept under the carpet based on naive hope that that we can successfully integrate Islam without diluting or even endangering the ethos and destiny of the West, we are just ushering in our own doom. [...] Modern, liberal, individualist, materialist Western man is the primary enemy of Europe. [...] My personal experiences with Muslims in Finland are neutral as I obviously avoid mingling or dealing with them in any way. I have gathered enough information on their ways to be well aware their effect on Finnish society is negative on many levels. I could, however, even befriend a Muslim for practical purposes because on an individual level I can look past politics, ideology, religion and race. Such things should not necessarily prevent civilised code of conduct and normal human relations»<sup>63</sup>.*



Over the years, Devilry's musical DNA has undoubtedly changed in favor of death metal, and there were quite a few surprises in 2007 when they were finally ready to debut with the full-length *Rites for the Spring of Supremacy*. Their first album is a steamroller of massive and well-cadenced extreme metal, both aggressive and implacable, where various references to National Socialist doctrine become part of a belief

that is clearly expressed in music: take for example the vivid images of Hitler's rallies in Nuremberg, explicitly evoked in *The Fourth Rise*, or the "holy death machines" created in order to ensure the purity of the blood as shown in the furious *C.O.T.N.O.* or the song *T.O.T.W.E.*, a sort of prophetic incitement to political anti-establishment action according to the principles of Hitler's party:

*«Yet as is the nature of our struggle eternal  
We must retain the proper spirit of the program  
Persist in the quest for total power  
Banish all moderate views and shun half-measures  
Advocate the all-encompassing nature  
The totality of the NS doctrine»<sup>64</sup>*

These concepts are more clearly expressed by Sir Holm himself during an interview:

*«National Socialism is a quest for a more noble and honourable world; living in harmony with nature based on the survival and triumph of race. [...] The Nazi willingness and readiness, even eagerness, to take drastic measures and use merciless violence in the fulfillment of this quest seems to be the most alienating factor for common people. That is perfectly understandable but I maintain that half-measures should be shunned and compromises avoided. [...] Hence my lack of interest in politics on an active, collective level. I applaud anyone who tries to further the cause in the sphere of so-called democratic political system but personally I see it as futile and hopeless»<sup>65</sup>.*

Despite the obvious statements in favor of Nazi ideology, Devilry hardly belong to the strictly NSBM cauldron. The stylistic peculiarities and their sectarian approach, knowingly devoted to a radical form of isolationism, put them in a category of their own, a rarity orbiting around a multi-faceted music scene. The perception that Sir Holm has of NSBM in Finland does not offer particular certainties, but rather confirms the complexity of the phenomenon.

*«According to my understanding there are indeed a lot of people who seem to feel affinity with National Socialism but I cannot even name any proper Finnish NSBM bands who advocate National Socialism as a coherent, all-encompassing Weltanschauung. Perhaps the classification is more inclusive than I would like to admit»<sup>66</sup>.*

Another example of an atypical approach to NSBM is offered by Stormheit. This project dating back to the late Nineties, had the opportunity to realize its efforts only a good five years later thanks to its frontman, carrying the eponymous war name Stormheit, assisted by percussionist Arto Ovaskainen. In barely thirty minutes, the debut demo, *Calling the Spirits of Hate* (2006), expresses the stylistic path undertaken by the



Finnish musician: strong, contemporary Viking metal that pays obvious homage to Bathory in terms of music and attitude. Over the years, Stormheit released a series of albums (*Caelic Weold Finnum* in 2009 and *Kvenland Chronicon Finlandiae* in 2011) without betraying the origins of Viking imprint, that are expressly inspired by the tribal magic of their lands, a mix of epic legends, cult of the blood, dark paganism, racial supremacy and identitarian revival echoed by belligerent statements stubborn to any form of compromise:

*«We must teach our children the ways and the values of our fathers to secure the future for our land, culture, language and race. We are but a link in an endless chain of eternal blood... and that blood holds the greatest gift of all. [...] If we are to oppose the invaders, the time of retribution is now! The more we wait, the more harder it will be... They are already here, raping our women, dealing drugs to our children, attacking our brothers, demanding rights that they surely don't deserve... they deserve nothing more but hate, scorn, violence and death!»<sup>67</sup>.*

Over the years, Stormheit progressively moved away from the English language in favor of his native idiom. A patriotic principle that reached its natural conclusion in 2011 with the release of *Chronicon Finlandiae*, whose lyrics are directly taken from the poem *Tarina Suuresta Tammesta* ("The Legend of the Great Oak") by the Finnish journalist and poet Eino Leino (1878-1926). Leino, whose first poems were largely influenced by the Kalevala<sup>68</sup> and



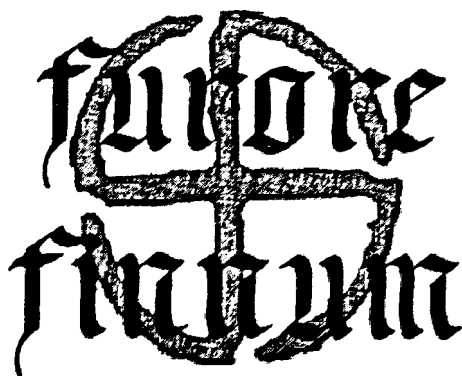
popular myth, is one of Finland's most important and beloved writers. The album is quite noticeable due to decidedly high-impact artwork which shows an ancient and peculiar type of swastika called "Heart of Turisas", a symbol of good luck particularly common in Finland since ancient times. Stormheit's use of the symbol does not seem to fall into the category of gratuitous provocation or political affiliation, especially taking into account the profound significance that binds this symbol to the original polytheistic tradition of the Finnish lands.

But if these may sound like (more or less convincing) mitigating circumstances, it is also true that there is no shortage of aggravating ones. Stormheit do not play black metal, but they are often associated with NSBM for many reasons, of which their anti-egalitarian approach is just one of many facets and, after all, just the tip of the iceberg. Further relevant aspects must be added to this definitively radical philosophical compartment, including the overt and tenaciously claimed affiliation to the Pagan Front, as well as past record releases that led the band to secure the collaboration of record labels such as Darker Than Black and Totenkopf Propaganda. Moreover, Stormheit himself is one of the pillars of the group known as Furore Finnum, which takes care of organizing major NSBM events in the Finnish territory. Despite stylistic differences, all these reasons place the band within the ranks of the infamous Nazi black metal scene.



Stormbeit

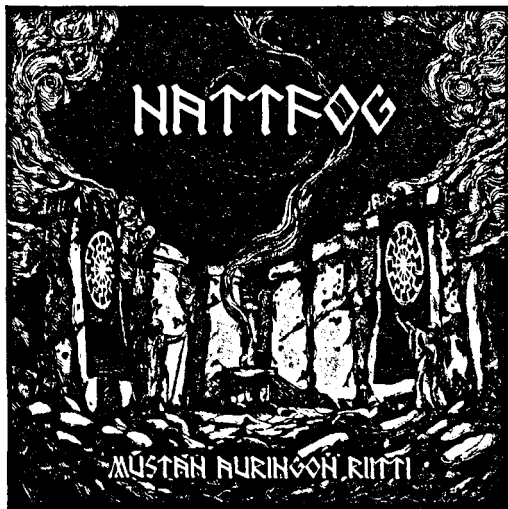
Returning to the more traditional realms of black metal we find Nekrokrist SS. This Finnish band can not go unnoticed, with a moniker that could hardly be less cumbersome - not to mention the unlikely pseudonyms of Nekroföhrer, Heinrich Hellmaster, Nekromengele and Nekrokommando taken by the members. Their debut demo, with the emblematic title *Gas Chambers Crematory and Hell*, dates back to the early 2000 and creates a distillate of extreme metal which will be further consecrated with the album *Suicide*, released in 2007. In some way, we could define Nekrokrist SS as the *non plus ultra* of a certain way of understanding primitive black metal: their particularly brutal and visceral attitude gives an extremely unhealthy and very claustrophobic aura to all their songs, and is the backbone of a message voted to (self) destruction. In fact, in spite of some concessions to political extremism in songs such as *Chamber 88*, the message that emerges is that of an apocalyptic nihilism that relies on any atrocity to claim total devastation, as suggested by *Waiting the Mass Destruction* and its lyrics which express happiness for «the raped corpses», «the smashed skulls», «the death of christians», «mass destruction», «gas chambers», «nuclear weapons»<sup>69</sup>. Nekrokrist SS do not aspire to mingle with the NSBM scene itself, since theirs is a suicidal black metal



devoted to the contempt of all mankind, and consequently themselves. One simply has to scroll through the various song titles (written in broken English) to be able to easily focus on the Finnish ensemble's true source of obsession: *Suicide Is Only Way, Itsemurha* ("suicide" in Finnish), *The End of Disgusting Life, Shoot Yourself...*

A few months after the release of *Suicide*, when asked about the meaning of the double "S" and how it is possible to combine a topic such as suicide with the National Socialist ideal, the band answered:

*«We don't. Although we both are interested in the esoteric side of National Socialism. Nekrokrist is not a NSBM band! It may give some inspiration for the lyrics but that's all [...] The "SS" of the band name has a very different meaning that you may think. In a*



*way it symbolizes the satanic brotherhood of me and Nekrokommando! The name Nekrokrist SS means us the brotherhood of anti-Christ»<sup>70</sup>.*

The Finnish quartet's suicidal raids continued with a self-titled EP and some split albums, among which, the one released with Nattfog deserves some attention. Nattfog are a young band that seems to follow the path that merges black metal, Nordic pride and paganism. Although their debut album titled *Mustan Auringon Riitti*, released on Hammer of Hate Records in 2012, has some characteristics<sup>71</sup> that led the band to be associated with NSBM, Nattfog also operate in that blur between ideology, nationalism and paganism, which at first glance seems to be far removed from well-defined political parties, while maintaining a "philosophical" common area.



In conclusion, we can say that Finland is a land unto itself for both black metal and NSBM within the musical ecosystem. Unlike what happened in areas such as Greece, where NSBM is a full-blown phenomenon that is separate from the rest of the extreme metal scene, or Sweden, where the leaders of the scene often belong to the skinhead circles on an "artistic assignment" to metal territories, the situation of the land of a thousand lakes appears even more peculiar. In the same scene, we can in fact find openly satanic or anti-Christian bands - related to all those dictates that are typical of early black metal - which draw smoothly from an aesthetic and conceptual background related to

political extremism. At the same time, there seems to be a coexistence, even a spirit of collaboration, among the various bands, in spite of their differences in how to approach the ideology within their music. All this brings us back to the unsolvable controversy on the validity and applicability of the term NSBM since, although linked by some lyrical choices, it seems difficult to justify throwing bands like Der Stürmer, Satanic Warmaster and Stormheit in the same cauldron, just to mention three names that differ in terms of sound, image and intent. Of course, a particular fondness for certain issues is evident, as they are recurring in the works of some of the most popular bands - Goatmoon, Hammer or White Wolves Kommando - and in some cases they are a firm pillar around which to forge the band's identity. What seems clear is that there is not an NSBM circle that is separate from the rest in Finland, but the same black metal scene absorbs all possible facets of the genre, from the most classical to the most controversial, so much so that it is impossible to create airtight compartments. In this case, the line that divides ideologized from classic black metal is not made clear, but rather takes on the contours of a gradual and prolonged transition in shades of gray.

## Notes:

- 1 - J. Mabire, *Thule — Le Soleil Retrouvé des Hyperboréens*, Paris, Laffont, 1977.
- 2 - Nordvrede, from *Ablaze Magazin* n.3, 2007.
- 3 - «*I made that because of pressure from record label and other band members. Today, Disiplin is as close to a one-man band as possible. [...] Disiplin evolved from simple black metal without direction, to pagan black metal - with direction*» from *Slavic Sword* (<http://slavicsword14.blogspot.com>), August 2009.
- 4 - Disiplin, press release published on *Blabbermouth* ([www.blabbermouth.net](http://www.blabbermouth.net)), April 2005.
- 5 - «*Yes, I incorporated all sorts of idiotic and childish satanic nonsense. It was supposed to be black metal and all that shit seemed appropriate*», from *Wegwisir* (<http://wegwisir.blogspot.com>), August 2010.
- 6 - From the liner notes in the CD booklet of *Anti-Life*.
- 7 - According to official sources, Nödtveidt became part of the newly founded order in 1995. Although it is not clear what role he had in it, it is likely that he was a guiding element, since the MLO will lose its consistency right after his suicide, which took place in 2006. The order then briefly re-emerged from obscurity as the Temple of the Black Light, before vanishing completely.
- 8 - Disiplin, from *Breidablik 'Zine* (<http://breidablik-zine.narod.ru>), 2009.
- 9 - Jon Nödtveidt was arrested and convicted - along with another acolyte of the MLO - in 1997 with the charge of shooting and killing a 37 year old gay man, an event that temporarily stalled the Swedish band's activities. Released in 2004, he re-founded the band with new members before the final split-up after his suicide.
- 10 - Disiplin, from *Wegwisir* (<http://wegwisir.blogspot.com>), August 2010.
- 11 - From the liner notes in the CD booklet of *Radikale Randgruppe*.

## ULTIMA THULE

12 - Disiplin, from the never published interview with Zero Tolerance which later appeared on the ATMF website ([www.atmf.net](http://www.atmf.net)).

13 - Dissection, from Metal Centre ([www.metalcentre.com](http://www.metalcentre.com)), June 2003.

14 - Marduk, from Nordic Vision n.3, spring 1995.

15 - Curiously, the first print run of the album has a picture of a Stridsvagn 104 wagon on the cover, the Swedish version of the Centurion tank supplied to the British army. Regain Records reissued the album in 2008 with revised packaging. In this new edition, there is a picture of a German Tiger tank instead.

16 - Nästrond, from Strength Through War n. 4, summer 2003

17 - AAVV, *Black Metal - European Roots and Musical Extremities*, Black Front Press, London 2012.

18 - Sigrblot, from Leather n' Spikes, 2004.

19 - Sigrblot, from the band's manifesto published on their official website ([www.sigrblot.se](http://www.sigrblot.se)).

20 - Sigrblot, from Unchain the Underground, 2004.

21 - Delving into a few names, Rosenberg is the author of the infamous *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, one of the key writings for understanding ideas and instances at the base of the National Socialist movement. Although at the time it was ill-received even by several leaders of the regime because of its philosophical background that merged pan-Germanism, Christianity, anti-Semitism and the myth of the blood. Kevin MacDonald is a contemporary scholar, professor of psychology at California State University and author of a series of books known as *The Culture of Critique* in which he uses the tools of evolutionary psychology to analyze the Jewish people and their influence in society. Here, anti-Semitism is defined as a phenomenon of contrast, which arises independently as a strategy of "Gentiles" in response to that of the Jews and their ethnocentrism - a thesis that, it is easy to understand, has not gone unnoticed: many arguments have been leveled against his work, accusing him of propagating racial hatred and providing a pseudo-scientific justification to the ravings of neo-Nazi groups. Jack London is famous worldwide for works such as *White Fang* and *The Call of the Wild*; his political orientation was anything but moderate, he first embraced socialism in its more radical forms and then he fell under the spell of doctrines seemingly at odds with his original vision, letting out topics such as the theory of the superman, the myth of the hero, natural selection, and a certain underlying racism.

22 - Sigrblot, from Wheresmyskin n. 9, 2004.

23 - «Why do you seek a hell in the future world? Isn't it scary enough the hell in which we live and which burns within us?» from *Theozoology* by Jörg Lanz Von Liebenfels. Contents aside, technically the sound sample is from a radio documentary titled *Mystery Babylon 40: The Occult History of the Third Reich*.

24 - Born Adolf Josef Lanz from a middle class family, from a young age he cultivated a passion for medieval history and, fascinated by the religious orders, he began his Cistercian novitiate at the age of 19. Dazzled by a bas-relief found in the monastery where he was living, depicting a nobleman who crushes a shapeless beast under his feet, Liebenfels reached the belief that this allegory perfectly summed up the battle between good and evil, which is to be found among us in animal form. Thus began his interest in zoology and, taking the cue from the sacred scriptures, the anthropological and archaeological discoveries, and the modern (for the time) scientific achievements - not least the discovery of X-rays - he came to formulate the basis of his future doctrine. His fundamental dissertation was published in 1905 with the bizarre title *Theozoology or the Science of the Sodomite-Apelings and the Divine Electron*.

25 - Cooper is also known for being the author of *Behold a Pale Horse*, an extremely widespread writing among



the supporters of various conspiracy theories (an apocalyptic medley into which the Illuminati, Skull and Bones, The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, the Bilderberg Group and aliens converge), as well as the tragic end of his story: in November 2011 he was in fact involved in a deadly shootout with the police, who had gone to his home with an arrest warrant for assault.

26 - Rosenberg's original text is slightly different and is not based on Europe but on Germany instead.

27 - The transcription of those tapes will result in the book *And Time Rolls On*, which is considered a sort of spiritual testament of the controversial author.

28 - August 10, 2008 is the release date written on Grand Belial's Key's official website. However, other sources say it was August 12, 2008, the anniversary of the *Dead Poets*, in memory of the execution of a group of Soviet Jewish dissidents in Moscow, ordered by Stalin in 1952.

29 - Refer to the remarkable book by D. Ekeröth *Swedish Death Metal*, Bazillion Points, July 2008.

30 - An official statement in which Saga distanced herself from the events in Oslo, and where she claims to be very saddened, defining them as «one of the most despicable criminal acts in recent years» had already been made public a few days after the attack via her website ([www.thisissaga.com](http://www.thisissaga.com)).

31 - Viking rock, or *vikingarock* in Swedish, is a music genre that blends Oi!, rock and folk, and is especially popular in Scandinavia. The key themes of the genre are the Viking sagas, Nordic traditions, the love of the country, which are also widely popular within the extreme Right movements, a scene that this kind of music is often associated with.

32 - The song is about Hans Eberhard Maikowski, a member of the SA killed on the night of January 30, 1933, the date of the settlement of the first Hitler government. According to the German propaganda that Fyrdung refer to, Maikowski was a hero of the Reich ambushed at night by a group of Communist dissidents. However, according to what emerged from some documents widely described in the book *To Die for Germany: Heroes in the Nazi Pantheon* by Jay Warren Baird (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1992), Maikowski was killed by Alfred Buske, another soldier of the SA. The event was then skillfully exploited by the propaganda of the Party that thought it useful to create a martyr for the cause.

33 - Long considered a pseudonym of Heinrich Himmler, there is actually Frithjof Fischer behind the name Wulf Sörensen, a writer who was active in the same period on several German publications.

34 - Regarding the Legionary Movement, referring to Codreanu's own words Mircea Eliade wrote: «If, as they say, *National Socialism is based on the Nation, and Fascism is based on the State, then the legionary movement has the right to claim to be the only Christian mysticism that is capable of guiding human communities [...] a Christian revolution, a spiritual revolution, ascetic and virile never before seen in the history of Europe*», from Claudio Mutti *Le penne dell'Arcangelo. Intellettuali e Guardia di Ferro*, Società Editrice Barbarossa, Milano, 1994.

35 - R. G. Fowler, curator of the Savitri Devi archive, has published a thorough examination on the ownership of the work online ([www.savitridevi.org](http://www.savitridevi.org)).

36 - The director explained how the first scenes of the movie are an adaptation of some sequences from *The Triumph of the Will*, a famous work of propaganda by filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl. The uniforms of the soldiers, which are clearly inspired by those of the officers of the Third Reich, and the structures placed in the scenes, which are inspired by the ideas of the architect Albert Speer, further support the references to the Nazi regime.

37 - Sons of Satan, from Satan's Sadist n.88, September 2010/January 2011.

38 - Bestial Mockery, from Metallian ([www.metallian.com](http://www.metallian.com)).

## ULTIMA THULE

39 - This was a feud that went on for some time, topped off by curious episodes. For example, palpable evidence of the bad blood that flowed between the Norwegian ensembles and Impaled Nazarene can be found in the terse interview given by the latter to the fanzine *Infernus* (edited by Absurd), in which Luttinen's tones regarding the resentful neighborhood relations are both annoyed and caustic. Another factor that caused a certain embitterment were some prank phone calls made by Beherit to Impaled Nazarene (the prank was confessed several years later, when the hatchet had been buried), in which the former, pretending to be Norwegian, made death threats to Luttinen and his band members. In response to this situation, Impaled Nazarene published some unpleasant epithets addressed to various members of the Norwegian black metal scene, and added the words «*No orders from Norway accepted*» on *Tol Corrupt Norz Norz Norz*.

40 - The band appears in a list of "influential forefathers" of NSBM published on the website National Socialist Black Metal ([www.nsbm.org](http://www.nsbm.org)).

41 - Excerpt from the song *Total War - Winter War* by Impaled Nazarene.

42 - Impaled Nazarene, from *Metallian* ([www.metallian.com](http://www.metallian.com)), March 2006.

43 - This at least is the reconstruction of the authorities, because Mika Luttinen, who back then was his band mate, remains of a different opinion as he is a firm believer of the suicide thesis.

44 - The soundtrack for this murder with occult implications was *The Cainian Chronicle* by Norwegian act Ancient, and considering that the guys were all black metal fans, the genre was quickly put on trial and became an easy scapegoat for the media. It is worth noticing that Metalion, famous Norwegian fanzine editor and scenester, wrote an article about the case in *Slayer Magazine* n. 14 where he clearly approved of the killers' actions, and he did not spare comments against Demonos Sova of Barathrum, who instead issued a statement in which he tried to separate those events from black metal and Satanism. Recently, in the volume *Metalion: The Slayer Mag Diaries* (Bazillion Points Books, Brooklyn, 2011), Metalion defined the article as "stupid", but at the time it caused him a fair bit of criticism.

45 - For a more detailed cronicle of the murder and related procedural consequences refer to *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*, Feral House 1998-2003 by Michael Moynihan and Didrik Soderlind.

46 - Excerpt from the song *Chambers* by Clandestine Blaze.

47 - Clandestine Blaze, from *Chronicles of Chaos* ([www.chroniclesofchaos.com](http://www.chroniclesofchaos.com)), March 2001.

48 - Excerpt from the song *Possession of Nordic Blood* by Clandestine Blaze.

49 - The name of the band is taken from a demo by the Polish band Lord of Evil.

50 - Excerpt from the song *Strength and Honour* by Satanic Warmaster.

51 - Satanic Warmaster, from *Cross of Black Steel* n.1, March 2004.

52 - The eighth letter of the alphabet is "H", and in the suprematist environments the code 88 is often used, it stands for "HH", that is: «*Heil Hitler*».

53 - Excerpt from the song *My Dreams of 8* by Satanic Warmaster.

54 - From the press release that appeared on Satanic Warmaster's MySpace, January 2011.

55 - Satanic Warmaster, from *Ylioppilaslehti* (<http://ylioppilaslehti.fi>), November 2009.

56 - Satanic Warmaster, from Ghost Kommand n.3, spring 2008.

57 - Goatmoon, from Black Terror Metal, February 2005.

58 - Ibid.

59 - Work by the German composer Herms Niel, who collaborated with Hitler's regime writing various music for band and orchestra. The original title of the piece is *Sieg Heil Viktoria*.

60 - The title *Shoax* is a wordplay in which the Hebrew word Shoah, that stands for the genocide of the Jewish people, is merged with the English word "hoax". An explicit reference to those revisionist claims that tend to downsize the Holocaust or, in extreme cases, to deny its actual existence.

61 - Excerpt from the song *Muslim Genocide* by Devilry.

62 - Devilry, interviewed by the authors, April 2012.

63 - Ibid.

64 - Excerpt from the song *T.O.T.W.E.* by Devilry.

65 - Devilry, interviewed by the authors, April 2012.

66 - Ibid.

67 - Stormheit, from the liner notes in the CD booklet of *Kvenland* (2009).

68 - Kalevala, or "Land of Kaleva", the mythical ancestor of the Finnish race. It is a poetic work written in the nineteenth century based on popular songs by the philologist and botanist Elias Lönnrot.

69 - Excerpt from the song *Waiting the Mass Destruction* by Nekrokrist SS.

70 - Nekrokrist SS, from Cross of Black Steel n.3, July 2011.

71 - The album cover shows a pagan ceremony in the shadow of megalithic rocks with the symbol of the Black Sun above them, while in the booklet there is a picture of Wewelsburg castle.

## Sound conflicts: Nordland Os. Ragnarock

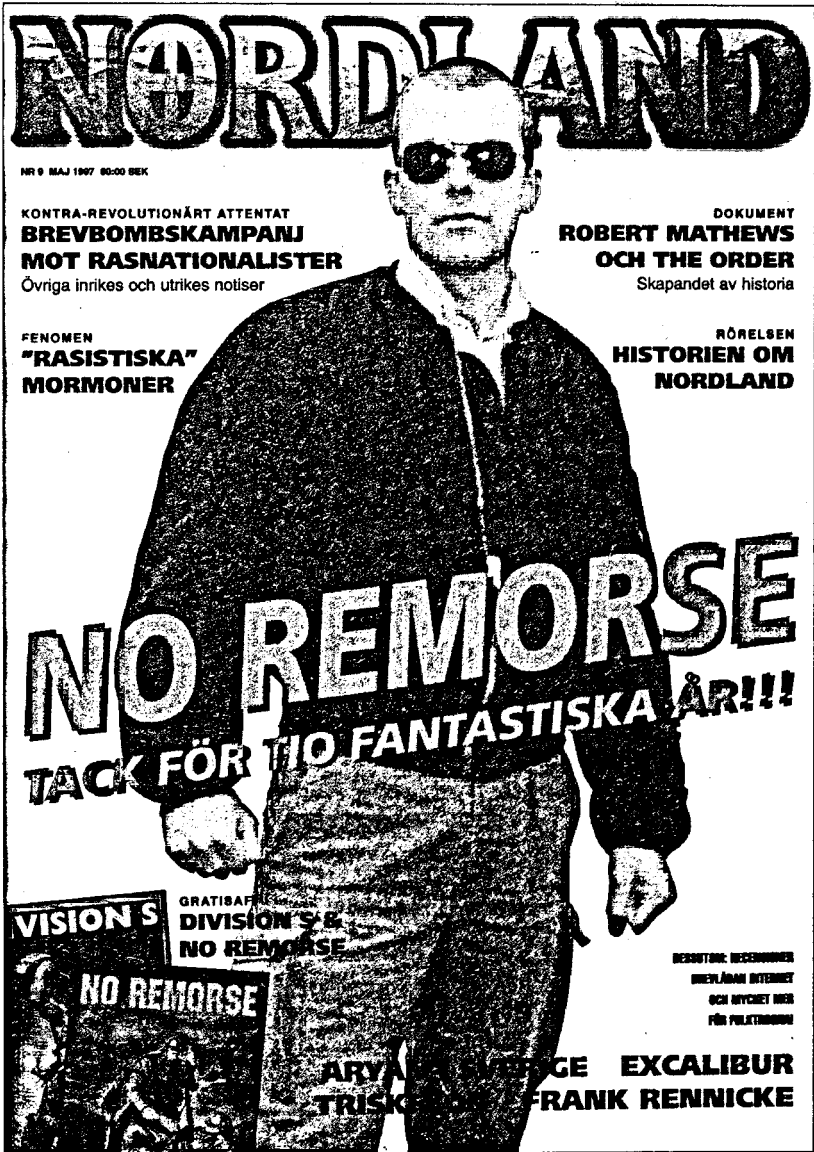
«THOSE WHO TALK DON'T DO. THOSE WHO DO DON'T TALK»<sup>1</sup>

[GEORGE HAWTHORNE]

«**S**ince the mid-1990s, Sweden has been one of the world's largest producers of White Power music, race hate videos, CDs and neo-Nazi skinhead merchandise<sup>2</sup>. These words of concern open the section dedicated to the activities of extra-parliamentary groups in Sweden presented in the annual report on anti-Semitism drawn up by the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism. In fact, on closer inspection, Sweden proves to be a fertile ground upon which various scenes related to white power proliferate; and in terms of numbers and impact on the continental scene the country will prove to be among the most important in Europe. In one specific case, the movement in this country became a decisive bridgehead for the operations on the old continent carried out by the American National Alliance founded by William Luther Pierce.

There are essentially two pillars that the Swedish scene rests on, both of which helped shape and develop the musical underground akin to the radical Right: Nordland Records and Ragnarock Records. While not strictly related to the development of NSBM, it is worth the time to briefly relate their stories, since several projects linked to the National Socialist black metal scene have used these channels to find an outlet in the overcrowded Scandinavian extreme metal market<sup>3</sup>.





**NORDLAND**

NR 9 MAJ 1987 80:00 SEK

KONTRA-REVOLUTIONÄRT ATTENTAT  
**BREVBOMBSKAMPANJ**  
**MOT RASNATIONALISTER**  
Övriga inrikes och utrikes notiser

FENOMEN  
**"RASISTISKA"**  
**MORMONER**

DOKUMENT  
**ROBERT MATTHEWS**  
**OCH THE ORDER**  
Skapandet av historia

RÖRELSEN  
**HISTORIEN OM**  
**NORDLAND**

**NO REMORSE**  
**TACK FÖR TIO FANTASTISKA ÅR!!!**

GRATISBILAGA  
**VISIONS**  
**DIVISION'S &**  
**NO REMORSE**

BERÄTTNING: BEZEMMER  
BREVÅRAN INTERNET  
OCH MYCKET MER  
FÖR PÅLÄSARNAS

**ARYAN RÖRSEL EXCALIBUR**  
**TRISKOLAN FRANK RENNICK**

Nordland's history began long ago. At the end of the Eighties, the aforementioned Blood & Honour movement made its appearance on the international scene. Founded by Ian Stuart Donaldson of Skrewdriver, it was destined to become one of the most significant phenomena in the extreme Right environment and to expand its sphere of influence well beyond the borders of the UK. A few years later, in the wake of a growing collaboration with the English scene, the militant Swedish underground spawned the magazine Nordland: well crafted, visually appealing and noticeably better than the

typical photocopied productions that filled the scene, it became a favorite media outlet for all members of the movement, hosting numerous articles of prominent personalities related to white power.

The next step was to expand the original editorial project by adding a record company. This move made Nordland one of the most prominent labels in the scene, thanks to the release of a number of pretty relevant RAC productions (No Remorse, Bully Boys, Swastika, Max Resist among others) thus establishing itself as a major hub for music distribution in Northern Europe. The organization granted the Swedes significant support, with much offered by George Burdi/Hawthorne (back then head of Resistance Records, whose history we shall discuss in greater detail in the chapter on the American scene) who wrote a short article full of praise in issue 9 of Nordland. These actions were the first signs of an affinity of views that came together soon after.

When Ian Stuart Donaldson died prematurely in a car accident on September 24, 1993, a destabilizing succession struggle erupted within Blood & Honour. The faction of Combat 18 emerged preemptorily, and among other activities, it took the reins of the record distribution, putting itself at the head of ISD Records<sup>4</sup>. Soon after, the seemingly unstoppable rise of B&H suffered a severe backlash: Donaldson and his Skrewdriver had been able to excite spirits around Europe and the short saga of his organization had shown the way of the continental extreme Right to many new recruits, but this delicate balance was destined to rapidly deteriorate. Some new guidelines issued by the C18, inside and outside the music setting, created the first irreconcilable rifts and Paul Burnley, a historical name in the RAC scene and leader of No Remorse, called himself out of the game followed by the inevitable streak of controversy and accusations of treason.

On the Swedish front, Nordland resented this change at the top and continued to provide support for Burnley and his group. It was the first of a series of conflicts between the parties in a scene that, although rapidly expanding, proved to lack the cohesion and ability to settle internal disputes once it was deprived of its stronger leader. From here on, the *modus operandi* of C18 became a matter of debate and caused continuous fractures in the already fragmented world of international extremist organizations.

In the same years, another Swedish label increased its activities: Ragnarock Records, owned by Tor Erik Nilsen<sup>5</sup>, which quickly gained notoriety and its own niche. Nilsen's main business partner, Marcel Schilf (who passed away on January 23, 2001), was a high-profile person in the movement: founder of NS Records and of the video division NS88, he was also the manager of the Club Valhalla, a favorite haunt of Helsingborg's neo-Nazi scene, that served as the geographic nerve center of the Swedish racist milieu. Schilf and Nilsen created the Blood & Honour chapter of Scandinavia, launched thanks to the intercession of C18 which, in open confrontation with the now established Nordland, found the ideal ally in Ragnarock to undermine the predominance of the rivals. Nilsen's label was also chosen as the sole distributor of ISD Records' releases, opening a further line of disagreement between the two existing factions.

In an escalation of threats and mutual boycotting, two distinct fronts were finally created. On one side was the Swedish-American axis Nordland/Resistance, and on the other was the Ragnarock/C18 faction, with the latter openly accusing their rivals of reducing militancy to a series of sham initiatives, giving space to musicians without backbone, whose purpose is to pursue a music career and not advocate the cause of the white race. Given the considerable capital that the labels were able to move at the time, the conflict, besides being of an obvious economic nature, was also ideological: it was the clash between two different ways of understanding the struggle against the system. The vision of Combat 18 (who were defined as "Hollywood Nazis" for the way they retraced the most trite clichés with which American cinema routinely condemns the white power movement) is aggressive, subversive and committed to a raucous "strategy of terror"; while Hawthorne's is more organized, nearly political, and supports the need to use the media to disseminate ideas and shape the conscience in order to create a united front of consent with the purpose of having an organization in which everyone plays a role (musicians, politicians, activists) without requiring the same degree of involvement, despite being devoted to the same cause.

The peak of this international diatribe, which continued between highs and lows through the years, was reached when a long list of prominent personalities of the scene united in a harsh condemnation of Combat 18's work. This multiple accusation was led by Hawthorne's own words:



«They have succeeded in doing more harm to the English movement than The Anti-Fascist League ever has, and the reds must hold their bellies laughing at the effectiveness of C18's efforts at destroying the movement. Like a cornered cat, or a traitor exposed, expect to see Combat 18's lies and slander campaign double, in a vain effort to prevent their demise or to take their opponents with them. Do not believe their pathetic words, and send out a message to them that their presence will not be tolerated any longer. For a decent comrade must not just share our blood, but also our honour, and the conduct of C18 has been totally unbecoming of white men. Good riddance to Combat 18!»<sup>6</sup>.

Among the signatories of this singular letter of condemnation are musicians and members of the Hammerskins movement, as well as one of the leaders universally recognized by the white nationalists: David Lane, revered former member of The Order, and, an influential voice acknowledged by all Right-wing extremists, despite his detention.

In the Swedish microcosm, however, the challenge between Nordland and Ragnarock saw the latter winning purely in terms of record releases, thanks to a more widespread organization, the logistic support provided by B&H, and a more functional superstructure: including efficient distribution channels, exclusive music productions, concert organization, and a series of activities that increased the participation of local skinheads. Despite these events, Nordland Records will remain part of the history of Right-wing extremism for its first pioneering efforts to operate across genres, trying to build a bridge between the identitarian and the extreme metal scene. A difficult mediation of which the compilation *White Death* is the most concrete evidence, with the participation of black metal ensembles such as Sigrblot and Poland's Veles, alongside death metal bands (Triskelon) or closer to hardcore (Iron Youth from Greece) and RAC (America's Centurion). In this sense, the label anticipated what would be later carried out on a larger scale by Resistance Records, which acquired the Swedish record company at the time of its decline, and relaunched its business thanks to an almost doubled catalog and a massive presence on both sides of the Atlantic.

This brief examination of the ordeals that hide behind two of the most important neo-Nazi labels of Northern Europe is useful to understand a few important



The brief programmatic manifesto reprinted in the booklet of the compilation *White Death* (1998)

facts. In Sweden (but more generally throughout the entire Scandinavian bloc) there are numerous organizations that are, in one way or another, related to the extreme Right. Although this area has failed to appear as a united and compact network locally, it has provided a privileged channel through which an array of bands could release their work, including NSBM albums. Moreover, Sweden has been the scene of a battle that involved the interests of various factions, on both sides of the ocean. The battle between the two labels, initially ignited by purely economic matters, was the spark that triggered the conflict between two great institutions of contemporary neo-Nazism: Resistance and C18. This clash has relentlessly reconfigured the balance of control within the white power scene, not only in Scandinavia, but globally, demonstrating how the constitution of an international network has torn down geographical barriers while globalizing the undergrowth of extremist movements. The result is a more rapid and effective dissemination of ideas but also the onset of inevitable internal power struggles and feuds.

## Notes:

1 - Excerpt from the writing signed by David Lane that appears at the end of a letter of allegations (*Blood & Dishonour - The Dishonourable Conduct of C18*) written by George Hawthorne against the modus operandi of C18, guilty of pompous proclamations and hooligan behavior that only end up attracting the attention of the authorities on the movement ([www.nizkor.org](http://www.nizkor.org)).

2 - Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism, *Antisemitism Worldwide 2000/1*, The University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 2002.

3 - The bibliography on the subject is rather sectorial and inconsistent, the dynamic of the events varies depending on the point of view from which the story is told and the ultimate nature of the facts is the result of rumors and speculations, far from having an official connotation. We have tried, cross-referencing various sources both inside and outside the scene, to tell this story through the most reliable and verifiable facts. Much of the information gathered comes from the only book that delves into the details, *White Riot: The Violent Story of Combat 18* by Nick Lowles (Milo Books, Bury 2001). Lowles is a journalist and currently the editor of Searchlight, an anti-Fascist magazine that has taken the first steps within the British Left then evolving to become a well-known investigation platform on everything that happens within the British extreme Right, including its extra-parliamentary offshoots such as Combat 18. Given the biased nature of the book, we have tried where possible to confirm the facts in order to expose a version of events as realistic as possible. Additional information was found on Nordland n. 9/1997, which contains a celebratory article on the history of the label of the same name.

4 - ISD Records is Blood & Honour's label of reference for music distribution. Named after the late founder of Skrewdriver.

5 - Also known as Erik Blücher, he is a Norwegian political activist. After his relocation to Sweden, he changed his name to Tor Erik Nilsen and became one of the leading men of Ragnarock Records and later of the B&H Scandinavia.

6 - George Hawthorne, *Blood & Dishonour - The Dishonourable Conduct of C18* ([www.nizkor.org](http://www.nizkor.org)).





Interview with:

## Mikko Aspa

**B**acked by years of militancy in the Finnish underground, owner of the two renowned labels Freak Animal and Northern Heritage (both different in genres, but committed to extreme music), founder of Clandestine Blaze, who have never failed to approach uncomfortable issues, and illustrious collaborator in radical bands like Goatmoon, Mikko Aspa is certainly a person of interest as well as a careful observer of the different aspects of black metal in its most anticommercial forms. Steering clear of overt political affiliations, his analysis from an "independent" perspective provides an interesting insight on the evolution of black metal and its ideological filiations.

**Clandestine Blaze is not an NSBM band but in your works you touched topics that can be ascribed to it. Where does the interest for these subjects come from? Have you ever had to face criticism for this choice?**

I think the vast majority of topics covered in NSBM are the same as in some of the black metal in general. I only write about topics that are relevant to me. Nordic blood, necessity of organized genocide, melancholy in situation where various virtues are missing in our contemporary life/surroundings, connection to nature, warrior spirit, etc. If I feel strongly about some of these, they will be the topics I cover. I see no reason for black metal to exist unless it's passionately created, about subject matter that invokes something bigger in creator or/and listener.

Some people are cautious if bands have "extremist views". As laughable as it sounds in context of black metal. Anything that can be passed as irony, fantasy or cool is fine. As soon as someone strongly believes, even honest regular emotion or idea might face strong opposition. Criticism or opposition is fine with me. It shows that not all sharp teeth of black metal wolves have been removed to serve easy pop culture entertainment purposes.

**As an external observer, what's your perception of the NSBM phenomenon? Do you think it is an organic scene of its own, or it is more of a label inaccurately used by the music media?**

Outsiders tend to lump together countless bands as NSBM, while hardly any bands include real National Socialist ideas. It's an umbrella term for anything with hints towards European history, white identity, European identity, nationalism, darker neo-paganism, somehow racially motivated, totalitarian or Fascist material, etc etc. To find actual NS content in NSBM is rare case. I have my doubts how many actually believe or stand for such ideals. I would assume much more simple minded hate is the fuel of creation, rather than belief in political or esoteric National Socialism.

Therefore I also understand well if people would be turned off by populist white power type approach, if they wanted noble Aryan NS art.

And lastly, I don't know I would consider myself an "external observer", as sometimes it feels that after all, I seem to know, live and relate more to NS than vast majority of people who call themselves such. I would guarantee a vast majority of NSBM remains really in a state of anti-social nihilism. Swastikas and racial hatred are mere undirected tumult, while the actual enlightenment for the true nature of National Socialism is far away.

In an old interview (2001) you said that CB is not a nazi band, since you are not socialist nor nationalist. But in your previous answer you also said that you *«live and relate to NS more than vast majority of people who call themselves such»*. So, did your opinion on the subject change in these years? And from what perspective (political, social, philosophical) do you relate to NS ideals?

It was a realization that we do not need to associate ourselves to currently existing, currently prevailing forms of culture or corrupted nations. To be nationalist, one doesn't have to feel connected to the perverse and grotesque form that your country has become and unhealthy traditions that are promoted to you as cornerstones of identity. The regular contemporary nationalist bows in front of symbols that have lost their meaning and their goals for nation or state are often repulsive. When being a hate fueled "outsider", it is extremely easy to reject everything, since you are so alienated from surroundings, yet this nihilism can be a gateway for new man. When I say "people who call themselves such", I obviously mean the ones who's "nazism" would be defined by provocations of Hollywood propaganda and irrational pathological racial hatred, but lacking any real connection to ideology.



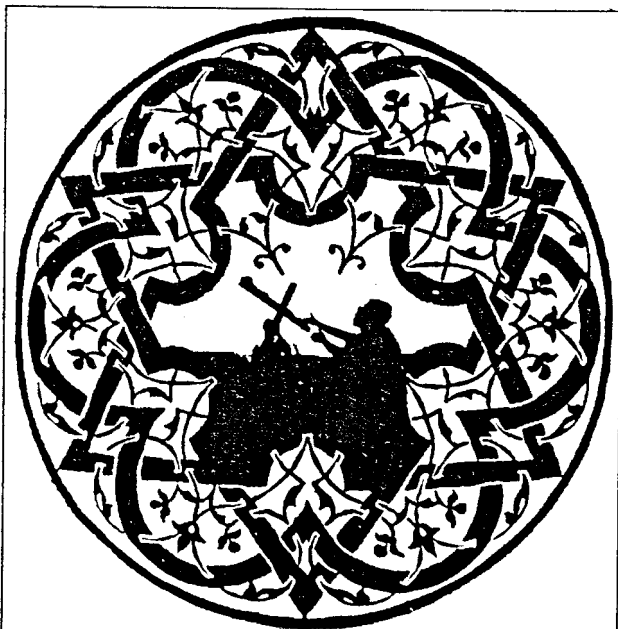
It is amusing to go through my own lyrics, old statements, and see the unmistakable focus around vast majority of concepts of NS, yet refusing to accept to be part!

I relate to the idea of *Weltanschauung* more than the game of mundane daily politics or economic issues. I relate to acceptance of natural hierarchy and biological reality. I relate to divinity of natural order and perspective it gives to many issues of life and death. To aim to crush any illusion that we all can do and be whatever, and that it's all good. Even in context of black metal, but most certainly in context of so called real life. While many of the goatfucking angelrapers may have drastic difficulties to explain why their lyrics or ideas would matter anywhere else but in context of heavy metal lyrics, the *Weltanschauung* manifested in music/lyrics, is valid in context of black metal, but also in life with its totalitarian power. What is the meaning of your black metal, if you live according to social-democrat or perhaps as servant of multicultural capitalism?

NS has been blamed or opposed for both - going too far in extremes or being "life loving attitude" unsuitable to canon of satanic black metal. I've been guilty as charged on such interpretation, so I shouldn't be too harsh on others. Yet; we would really need to start thinking what is the "death" and destruction we promote in black metal and what is the "life" we oppose? It could be too long an issue to deal in one simple answer, but hopefully there will be a time and place for this before the genre utterly stagnates as a merely sub-cultural echo of contemporary popular culture. To really begin route to become effective counter-cultural force.

National Socialism today seems pretty distant from its original conception, at least if we look at how it is used and promoted inside the black metal milieu. So what's your idea of "National Socialism" and what do you think stands behind it? We're talking about an ideology that came out from a very particular situation more than 80 years ago. Do you think that Nazism or some related philosophy can still have a place in today's world?

I think it can be misleading to say "original conception", since there hardly is a firm consistent ideology that



Manifestation Of  
Jomoclastic Power  
Of Natural Might

was carved into stone. There hardly is clear doctrine to follow. It simply has evolved since early days, by a variety of authors and organizations. Even if Hitler never wanted to revise *Mein Kampf*, he clearly said it was written as distressed imprisoned political activist and not in role of führer. His message was that book was bound to historical moment, specific time and place and adjustments made later on were proof of organic and living ideology. His book didn't have to be revised, when ideology and its concrete methods progressed further. And even further, that not all details of philosophy needs to be revealed to everybody - especially not at first. It is best to accept a handful of core principles as foundation, than go into endless route of nitpicking of minor details.

Even the dumbest brain should understand, National Socialism within black metal can't be the same as in state level politics of specific European countries a lifetime ago. Even the dumbest brain should understand that our qualities put us to different positions in the movement. It would be essential to expect one man to fulfill his duty, but it would be crucial mistake to expect as if he alone would represent every role and fulfill every duty within the movement!

My view on National Socialism would be perhaps leaning slightly towards the philosophical side, where core transforms perhaps into 4 words: Life according natural order. Life, as struggle. Not life as happiness or pursuit of hedonistic joys. Life as reach of highest potential of biological and spiritual capacity, not life as submission to lowest common denominator of prevailing standard. Life as bringers of death, not as suicidal weakling. Life among natural hierarchies and groups where strength rises from fidelity. Life with approval of what the enemy calls "evil", "inhumane" or "destructive". Humanists and christians, including their representatives within black metal, are among the other side. They may bark about "life lovers" or "evil nazi", yet they are hardly in position to do little else than finally conclude they are the slaves of modern world morality. Their evilness most often remains the mere antithesis of christian or humanist values, not from a morally advanced level. Opposition is hardly opposition, when trapped in the same artificial construction. This is expressed already since the very first Clandestine Blaze album.

The problems that existed in pre-WWII have gone nowhere, only grown beyond wildest imagination. Man can fight against natural order for limited time, but will eventually lose. On the level of state, it will be very clear, the volk will not serve an abstract consumer machine endlessly. Dissatisfaction and tumult is rising, not only on the fringe of society, but as a general attitude of people acknowledging there needs to be something more. It may need the utmost crisis to fuel the rebirth, yet all the visions presented in apocalyptic black metal, will be foreword for rise of new man, beyond restrictions of current morals and corrupted world.

**It's a widespread opinion that NSBM is an extreme form of black metal, triggered by the commercialization of the genre, which in turn led to the loss of its primary subversive force. Do you agree with this idea?**

I think commercialization of genre led to many things in underground, not only NSBM. But this would lead to NSBM's dilemma how it could reject being just another

pop culture fringe phenomena, and truly represent more radical national socialist ideals in practice. Practice meaning even simply as a musical genre - not the actual life of the artists. That it would not be just another example of entertainment of modern consumer society. In times of bourgeois collectors satisfy their endless hunger of cult goods they don't need, but invest hundreds of dollars, NSBM appears to be near total opposite of that. Conscious move away from that could be necessary.

**Which are, in your opinion, the most influential bands and what do you think they added to the genre?**

If we reject the term "NSBM" and simply consider radical and revolutionary black metal, my personal choices would be:

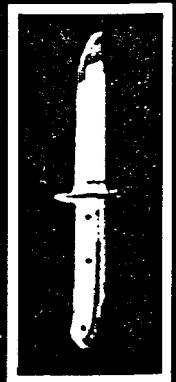
- Graveland, Veles, Fullmoon, Capricornus and several other bands from Poland in general. To combine the best elements of black metal to folk and true feelings. You could sense the bands were not here to be rockstars, they were not "musicians" or "entertainers". But something entirely different. Especially Capricornus *Stahlgewitter* remains as one of finest examples where everything is done... wrong, but it comes out just right!

- Absurd from Germany, without doubt black metal to the core - but hardly ever sounding or looking what people expect black metal to be.

- Satanic Warmaster in Finland, being one of the key driving forces to shape an entire decade worth of new Finnish black metal. To show that with blatant honesty and not being too cautious about what either media or the stubborn genre purists think, you reach higher. Examples of how even black metal that crosses over to bigger magazines, festivals and large distribution doesn't need to compromise its crucial elements.

- Grand Belial's Key for being a band nobody has been able to copy. Creating their own music and even their own terminology. At the same time so brute and absurd, but witty and meaningful. While nullified retro propaganda may lose its impact, GBK's vulgarity is total anti-kosher for mind. Bands advanced skills, exceptionality and distinctive identity is like an Aryan metal ideal.

# Northern Heritage



- Der Stürmer for pretty much single handedly taking NSBM to the utmost core of anti-musical propaganda vehicle for devotees only.

**Black metal was born with an essentially anti-Christian and Satanic concept - sometimes openly nihilistic - followed over time by a more and more widespread ideological and "social" aspect (National Socialism, anti-Semitism, white pride). Do you think these elements can coherently coexist?**

The idea that you should separate specific concepts to purified artificial products seems unnatural. It doesn't seem to carry the actual weight of creativity, but the rancid stench of calculated image. If the anti-Christian message seeks to replace Christian values and traditions with something else, shouldn't it at least hint what this something else is? Should black metal be so impotent, that it can't cover any true ideal, which explains why rejection happened? Or does the writer even know why he would reject Christianity? I have started to believe the latter case is true. It is simply conditioned response of the self-proclaimed modern "Satanist", whose rejections don't actually happen. One could write about killing god and worshipping the horned one, album after album, being unable to tell anything worth hearing.

If one rejects the Jewish media Nazi image and looks into the core of National Socialism, it simply walks hand in hand with many black metal (or Satanic) ideals. As the core of NS, one could perhaps describe life according to natural order, the fundamental struggle for survival - therefore doing it in respect of laws of nature (from perspective of that struggle). With intent to reject the corrupted and unnatural world (including Christianity, capitalism, Communism, all sorts of unnatural constructions) and aim for creation of new advance man.

You look for many esoteric orders or branches of satanic leanings, and you find pretty much similar ideas. It would be foolish to think NSBM would connect to banal economics and contemporary welfare or that it would be all about bloodthirst and total genocide. If the commercialization and meaninglessness of popularized and pussyfied black metal evoked disgust and rejection against the concept of consumer society and shallow pop culture, it's already perhaps a step towards NS ideals. I have always despised suicidal and self-destructive black metal. And perhaps now more than ever despised egocentric black metal focused on mundane meaningless man. If we remove the pointless vulgar necro metal as well as the self-destructive element from black metal, basically all that remains is compatible for advanced philosophy, spirit as well as practical life.

**Finland has a thriving extreme scene, with bands that use controversial themes and iconography without professing a specific political affiliation. However, compared to what happens in other countries, it seems there are no problems of coexistence. What does it depend on? Could Finland's peculiar history have favoured the acceptance of such ideas/symbols?**

History is of course one thing. Explaining why "Suomi Finland Perkele" in its glorification of the Winter War could raise to official record charts in Finland, one could

assume a german BM band doing the same about their history could never do it. Another thing is, that the Finnish "scene" is run by underground people. There is hardly a market to be exploited by leeches who would try to popularize it for profit. The most extreme of the genre have the exact same possibilities to operate as the rock stars. You could see Goatmoon playing in quite a big festival. Whatever Mr. Luttinen would say, Impaled Nazarene remains the popular legend of Finnish extreme metal.

One should not forget the shift in society has happened together with progression of (black) metal. While the 80's type punky deaththrashers would rebel against the pressure of society in very

same way as hippies of 60's, the new generations have grown together with globalization and such, and therefore rise of nationalism, dissatisfaction towards immigration politics, etc remains strong. The new face of anti-Christianity would not be about rejection of too strict and too conservative control force, but against impotent, corrupt, humanist and unnatural Christianity.



*Clandestine Blaze*

This is what one could hope: the change from naive rebels seeking personal pleasures to political soldiers celebrating advanced man and natural order.

**In a lot of countries the NSBM explosion is the result of the skinhead scene approaching the metal scene. Did it also happen in Finland? Do you think this proximity can bring something good into the extreme metal scene?**

There is some cross over, but not too much. I believe that rather than skinhead scene approaching black metal, it would be other way round. Black metal people approaching radical skinhead culture and values surrounding it.

**The growing "political threat" has also brought heavy metal in the sights of antifa organizations that started to hinder certain bands/events. Is it a problem that concerns Finland too?**

It all operates on level of social networks. We live in a climate where complaining appears to be the highest virtue next to a "fuck the world" attitude. People will always bitch about

something, but to really do anything about anything, is a rare case. Antifa is a shadow organization here. It only exists in the hands of a couple activists who spend their lives with all sorts of egalitarian issues, human and animal rights under wide variety of organisation names.

**Clandestine Blaze have never played live, however, on various occasions you've been part of Goatmoon's live line-up. Do you remember any particular situations where the band's politically incorrect attitude has caused problems with the audience or the local authorities?**

A Goatmoon live gig in Germany had a curious incident. When arriving in a small town near the venue, I think it was 9 police vans were circulating to make it difficult. Our car was driven behind some buildings, waiting until a phone call came that it was good to drive to the venue. Even with a very short drive, two police cars managed to see a suspicious car and follow right on our tail. Gates of venue were closed just in front of them. Police could not burst in without proper reason and I think with lawyers of venue and negotiations with police they ended up doing quick search inside to see if something illegal was happening. Obviously all merch was hidden meanwhile and there was no problems, therefore police had no choice but leave the venue. They did create road-stops and demand papers/invitations from people. I think most issues that happen, are venue owners who do not want a "bad reputation". If one would not care about such things, there is very little that can be done.

**Is it possible to determine where art ends and a real political agenda begins? And even if it was a propaganda tool, should black metal be concerned about not hurting the feelings of those who are more sensitive towards certain topics?**

## Eliminate Zionist Cancer!

Ei ole epäilystäkään siitä, etteivätkö "kristillisen sionismin" edustajat näe VT:ssa patriarkoille Luvatusa maasta annettujen lupauksien (esim. 1 Moos 13:14-15) täyttyneen Israelin valtion perustamisen myötä. Israelin valtio ei kuitenkaan ole pelkkä maallinen yksikkö, vaan suhtautumisemme sen poliittiseen olemassaoloon määrää senkin, olemmeko Jumalan vai saatanan puolella<sup>17</sup>.

Näin opettaessaan "kristillinen sionismi" tosiasiallisesti tekee Israel-kysymyksestä uskon liittyvän, normatiivisen asian. Suhtemme Israelin valtioon ei ole pelkästään maallinen kysymys, vaan "kristillisen sionismin" eskatologiseen näkökulmasta katsottuna mitä vakavimmin hengellinen kysymys. Voisimme puhua

## Destroy Israel!

*The insert accompanying On the Mission, vinyl edition (1999)*

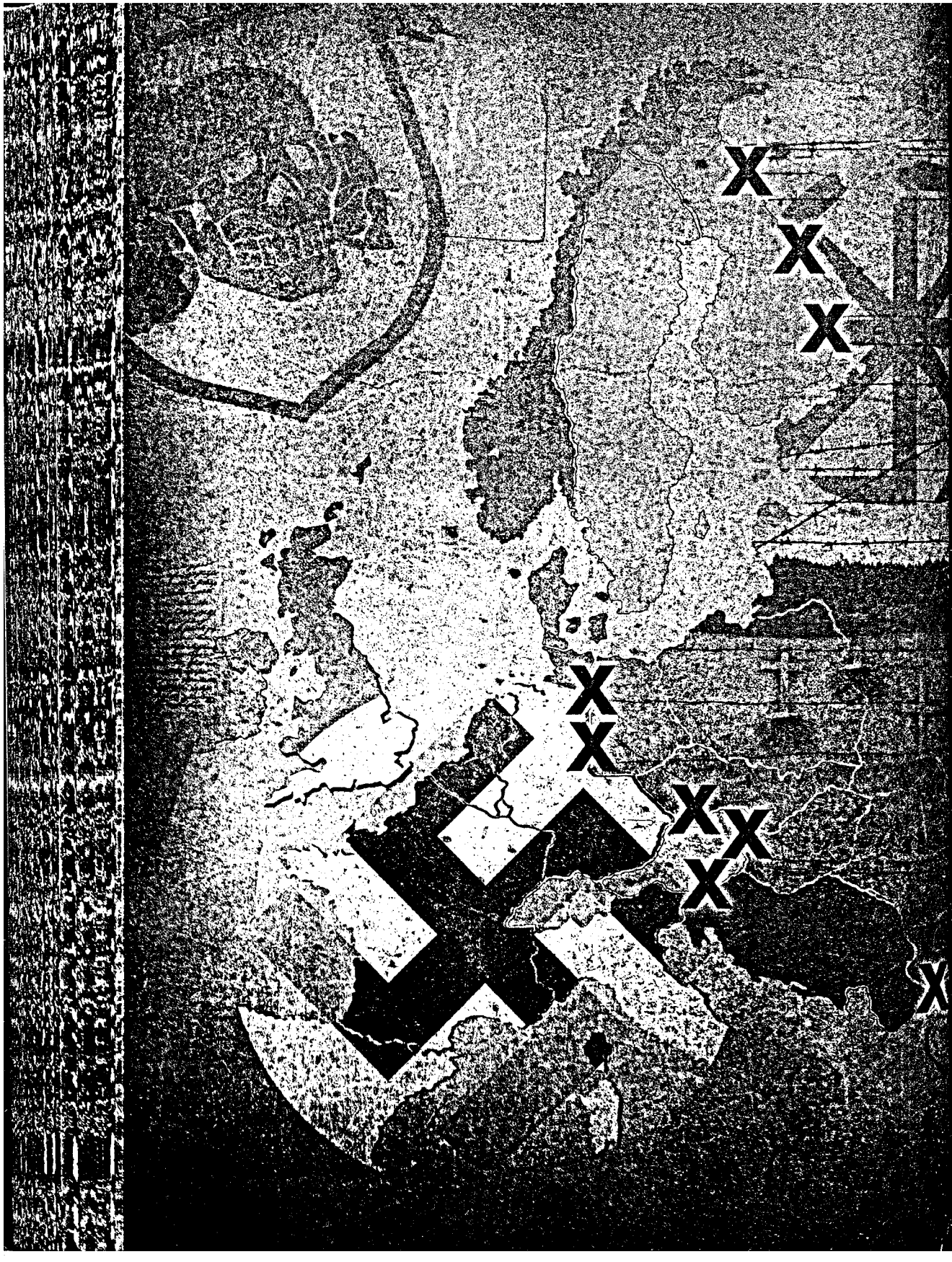


Art as it should be understood, already carries values, visions and ideas of its creator. It doesn't have to be political in the sense of mundane politics - but it's values of some sort and how they relate to life and decisions. Even in a case of mere representation of beauty or the grotesque!

If I would release recording what is self recorded, self released, distributed by myself, for a reasonable price and for an inspired / fanatical audience - that carries already political message opposing consumerist mass culture. The songs, lyrics, and many other things go further and from overall big arches to details. That can be understood as political agenda.

As a black metal band or as an NSBM band, if you hurt someone feelings, he is most likely your opposer. There is no need to try and hide sensitive subjects for the sake of popularity, since this popularity based on falseness means absolutely nothing. Unless your aim was popularity itself in tradition of rock'n'roll, which I hope the core of black metal would have rejected long time ago.





# Black shadows over Europa NSBM West and East of the Iron Curtain

«EUROPA: THE GATES OF HEAVEN. EUROPA: THE GATES OF HELL»<sup>1</sup>

[DEATH IN JUNE]

**B**orn in the shadow of an opulent West, heavily influenced by the phenomena of Americanization and later globalization that have shaken Europe and affected the nations on an economic and social level, western NSBM has reacted violently with ultra-conservative logic to all the “side effects” that great historical changes always bring with them. Although it would be impossible to drill down and analyze the degree of permeability of each individual country to the NSBM phenomenon and its related claims, it is still worthwhile to have an overview, however broad, of some of the most important projects that were spawned at the four corners of the continent and that, often working in semi-clandestine conditions, have searched for their slice of notoriety in a scene so hungry for proselytes that it often overlooked the actual validity of the proposals. It is otherwise impossible to explain the cult status achieved by some smaller bands, whose ideological brutality is often inversely proportional to their technical qualities. Nevertheless, the range of NSBM bands is constantly growing, and reaches a surprising level if we accept all those bands that draw from a similar philosophical background, without the looming shadow of the swastika, as part of the same movement.

But whatever the origin, the purpose, the musical or cultural profile, these bands often operate as loose cannons. They infest their respective national scenes like sappers, who regardless of everything and everyone, seamlessly release tapes, vinyl and split albums that are the prerogative of an eager and loyal audience - whether they are in search of the perfect soundtrack for an alleged “Nazi international” or, more simply, a non-aligned subversive form of entertainment.



# Belgium

A cliché describes the NSBM bands as advocates of bad music that is primitive to say the least if not totally inaudible. Not to mention the nonchalance with which they slap images of death, swastikas and nazi salutes on the covers of their records. Of course, this is not always the case, but if it is true that behind every stereotype there is a small grain of truth, there is one name that secures the pairing of NSBM and brutal ignorance: Aryan Kampf 88.

*«We are Aryan fighters paying tribute to A. H., that's all. Our band name came from nowhere, it doesn't require 10 hours of thought thinking to be understood, it pissed a lot of people off, it's judged as being dumb or simplistic, well, fuck it, this is radical, "in your face, you fucking Hebrews" and full of sense and easy to remember»<sup>2</sup>.*

The combo was formed in Belgium in 2003, when some Walloon skinheads, who were also fans of black metal, decided to give a jolt to the local music scene. Aryan Kampf 88 began to be talked about after the release of some self-produced tapes that, although in a limited run, began to spread the name, as well as the controversial reputation of the members. In addition to the extremely explicit and aggressive image of the band, the members stood out in the cities of Namur and Bruges during the early twenty-first century for several racially motivated assaults that led to the imprisonment of their first singer, carrying the explicit pseudonym WaffenSS Sturm.

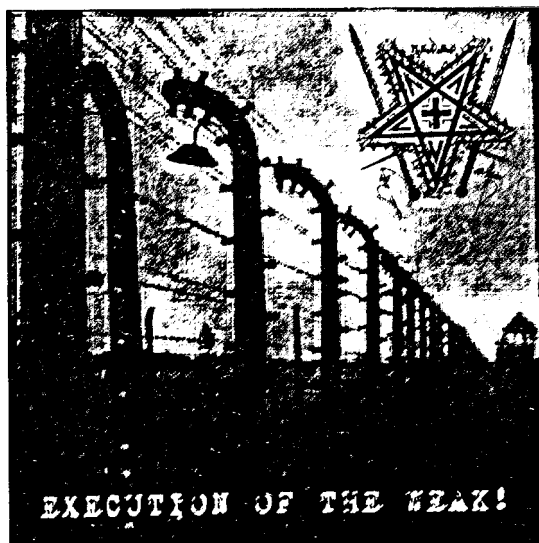


In 2009, the British label Wolcnum Records offered to release the Belgian skinheads' first actual full-length, so in the summer of the same year, the retrospective CD (made out of the band's first three cassettes) *NSBM - Anthologie d'un Kombat Belge* saw the light: half an hour of coarse lo-fi metal, where clumsy monotonous riffs mix with Hitler anthems and barbaric neo-Nazi propaganda. There is no risk of misunderstanding songs like *Gestapo Holocaust*, 88 the Number of

*Purity, Mein Kampf, NSBM Radical Propaganda* or *Remember 1933*; not to mention that the cover, portraying the geographical boundaries of the province of Namur in Wallonia, has the colors of the flag of the Third Reich. Whether one wants to believe it or not, *NSBM - Anthologie d'un Kombât Belge* is considered a sort of gem among the militants of the NS music scene. In spite of the poor technical quality of the final product, and perhaps precisely because of a message among the rawest and most explicit ever generated, this CD is one of the most sought-after collector's items for any self-respecting follower of the NSBM scene. Not surprisingly, Wolcnum Records also released the band's first official tape, *Acht und Achtzig*.

Some might be surprised to see Aryan Kampf 88 covering *Ready to Fuck* by the Brazilian combo Sarcófago, but for the Belgian band, it is just another tribute to the cult of the hardest, most feral and uncompromising metal that the history of music has ever known. The track serves as a fitting tribute, apart from a certain obvious "environmental incompatibility": «*We don't give a fuck about them being from a third world shithole. Belgium is a third world country now*»<sup>3</sup>. However, it seems that Aryan Kampf 88 would not have much luck with South America, considering that the Brazilian label Krieg (producer of the band's first official shirts) also released a bootleg tape in 300 copies titled *Mein Kampf* without their consent. An unofficial and therefore unacceptable operation, that on the other hand, shows an enduring interest in this band. There is a receptive audience to the message of Aryan Kampf 88, and therefore there are labels that are ready to spread their violent music propaganda.

Remaining in Belgium, and always in deference to purely lo-fi sounding black metal, we have to spend at least a couple of lines on the unacknowledged NSDAP. Advocates of improbable NS metal with an elitist "anti-human" attitude, their only self-produced full-length, *Execution of the Weak!* (2010), does not offer anything worth mentioning in terms of sound, neither does the bland mixture of Nazi-Satanism raise the quality of the product in general. Yet it must be said, that in some way, this record has left its mark: browsing the CD booklet with due attention, we find the high-sounding proclamations written in poor English that are reproduced on the inside, stumble dramatically in a special dedication addressed to Hitler's chosen troops. In fact, instead of the *Waffen SS*, an



*The cover of NSDAP's album*



unlikely blunder pays homage to what may seem like a new brand of belligerent cookies: the "Wafers SS"!

Moving away from such examples of NSBM orthodoxy, the history of Ancient Rites is worth mentioning. In this case, it must be stressed that the band led by the charismatic Gunther Theys, certainly cannot be counted among the ranks of the legions of NS metal, but it is also true that it fell prey to fierce criticism on some occasions, due to a lack of compliance with the needs of today's politically correct music industry. With twenty years of activity behind them, Ancient Rites have had an extremely precarious line-up since the beginning, mostly due to dramatic defections linked to fatal accidents and even suicides. From the Nineties until today, Theys remains the only constant in the band, guiding it along a path where black and Viking metal merge into an original sound that is increasingly attentive towards a spirit of pan-European revenge. Alongside Ancient Rites, a side-project called Lion's Pride set a bad example during the early twenty-first century. Emerging here, were all those markedly nationalist traits (specifically focused on the Flemish people) that are so disliked by moderate audiences which consider the ideological-musical arsenal of a band so close to the skinhead culture, that blatantly deal with explicit themes like pride and European national identity, to be rather unacceptable. With such premises, it is not hard to understand the ambivalent attention roused on both sides (supporters and opponents) as well as the presence of Ancient Rites on old Belgian skinhead bulletins where they were described with words such as: «*Our Flemish pride...*»<sup>4</sup>.

## Switzerland

As we have seen thus far, NSBM has managed to take root in the most diverse latitudes through a subtle process of refinement of its themes. It is no wonder then that, albeit in an unorthodox form, it has also found asylum in the very neutral Switzerland, a country that has always been considered an oasis of tranquility surrounded by lush alpine landscapes. Apparently, this State has no reason to hatch historical/political resentments - their only link with the deceased Reich can be found in some opaque banking transactions regarding the infamous "Nazi gold". Nevertheless, it is known for giving birth to two essential bands in the history of extreme music: the forefathers Hellhammer, keepers of an immutable black metal tradition, and the chameleon-esque Samael, tireless innovators and bitter enemies of stagnant sounds. However, although hidden from the limelight, a group of bands has managed to carve out its own breathing space under the sign of the swastika.

Among the oldest and most controversial members of the Swiss radical black metal scene are Eisenwinter (a one-man band from Basel, that has been active for more than fifteen years), whose peculiar "Helvetische Primitive Black Metal" has left more than



one listener curiously puzzled. The band is the creation of Zwingherr Greif, and stands as an integral part of the European NSBM framework, that succeeded in giving its contribution to the scene in terms of demos, split albums, EPs and full-lengths, stepping forward as the first standard bearer of the Swiss Aryan revolt. Advocating black metal that is among the most unclassifiable in the entire extreme scene, the timid symphonic ambitions of

the early years have given way to a sound marked with a punk vein, stuffed with extremely raw inserts and a vocal line that can hardly be praised. Although this is one of the most renowned projects in the scene, its releases have always divided fans of the genre among those who denigrate the lo-fi sound and those who exalt the provocative vein and personal style. Whatever the critical judgment is, the fact remains that, right from the start, Zwingherr Greif has had a clear idea regarding the ideological stance of his project:

*«EISENWINTER IS ARYAN BLACK METAL OF COURSE! There can't be a single doubt about that. And it is not Aryan because I am white and because I have Germanic ancestors. It is Aryan because I'm dedicated to the Nordic vein of black metal and radically opposed to all the Jewish creations in this world such as liberalism, comunism, multiculture and Christianity, etc. [...] Every white Germanic person who fights against the Weltjudentum (world-jewry) is Aryan. [...] Aryan belief is not at all politics. Politics are a Jewish invention, too. National Socialism is a religion and nothing less!»<sup>5</sup>.*

In support of this, Eisenwinter opted for the full-blown choreography, with runes, swastikas and imperial eagles. The band even collaborated with projects such as the irrefutably NSBM combo Aryan Blood, and also participated in compromising compilations like the second volume of *The Night and the Fog*, the *«Hammer of National Socialist black metal»*, produced by the Pagan Front. In their works, titles such as *Absolute Untermenschenvernichtung*, *Das Pentagon in Flammen*, *Auschwitzer Grimmigkeit* are coupled with tributes to some tutelary deities of Eastern Europe, as proven by the cover of *Carpathian Windspirit* taken from *United Aryan Evil* by Polish combo Fullmoon.

In spite of the minimalist production that accompanies each output of the Swiss project, an example of a primitive sound to be proud of (an aspect privileged by most of the NSBM scene), and despite the obvious references to an awkward pan-Germanism, something below the surface is not quite right. The feeling that we are facing a weird form of parody creeps up on several occasions. Especially in the latest productions, the provocative nature takes on a farcical tone, as proven by songs such as *Sailor Moon*<sup>6</sup> or *Mit Stahltyrann Bignasca im Verbrennungsfeldzug gegen Felder, Wälder & Wiesen*<sup>7</sup> included on *Armee der*





Flyer advertising the release of Monumentales Scheitern

*Arischen Untoten* (2012). But even the previous *Monumentales Scheitern* (2010), starting with the dubious old person on the cover and the excesses of the liner notes, written in poor English with an intransigent air of “true evil” seem to give vent to a coarse paradoxical irony that definitely looks out of place in a genre like NSBM:

*«This Aryan pagan evil Nazi war battle things and stuff I recorded with hateful spirit of vengeance under the moon of evil and encrusted in the black funeral frozen spirit of retribution and trueness! It is dedicated to these who have alike me still not yet found anything better to do with their time than to record true underground stuff in the old veins».*

Explicit parodies such as *Call Me N.S. Black Metal* (to the tune of the famous *Paddy Rolling Stone* by the unapologetic Irish drunkard Shane McGowan) leave little doubt as to Eisenwinter's irresistible temptation in wanting to repeatedly indulge as a comedic music act. This uniquely humorous vein seems to go hand in hand with a certain impatience towards the NSBM scene that Zwingherr Greif has shown in some recent statements<sup>4</sup>, a sign that, if not representing a change in his line of thinking, is at least a re-evaluation of his own musical reality that has led to seeing things in a less blatantly radical light, that is more prone to black humor. Whatever the ultimate causes, the fact remains that Eisenwinter still enjoy recognition for being outside the box and ultimately serve as an unpredictable variable in a scene with normally unchangeable ideological inclinations.

Menegoth from Zurich, who took their name from Tolkien's universe, appear less standoffish and technically more elaborate. Their moniker means “Thousand Caves” and is the name of a city located in the realm of Doriath, as narrated in *The Silmarillion*, the



Menegoth

famous mythopoetic work that reconstructs the genesis and the mythology of the world where the events spawned from the imagination of J.R.R. Tolkien take place. *Helvetische Urgewalt*, the debut released on Ulfhednirs Records, seems to thrive on Germanic echoes - starting with the black sun screen-printed on the disc - set in still immature black metal, which does not fail to hit hard when needed and surrenders to the impulsive vehemence of the Teutonic school. The intro, punctuated by the rhythmic sound of boots marching in the rain, paves the way for a slow descent through songs with programmatic titles such as *Ultima Thule Erwache* and *Schwarze Sonne*, until the cover of *Germanien Über Alles* by Absurd. So far, it seems the perfect compendium of the most obvious NSBM band out there, but the second release demonstrates an unusual perspective and a wider overview than most.

A self-titled album was released in 2007, and is nothing but a collection of tracks previously released on demo plus a handful of cover songs. Of these, *Adoration to Europa* stands out - a song by Von Thronstahl from Germany, an identitarian combo devoted to non-metal sonorities, more oriented towards a mix of neofolk and martial neoclassical industrial. One of the members of the German project, Josef K. himself, was a guest on Menegroth's following work, which pairs obvious musical progress (also guaranteed by better production) with an original lyrical approach: *Gazourmah*, released on Darker Than Black, seems to shift the focus towards the other end of the Rome-Berlin axis, as the cumbersome *fascies lictoriae* that appears on the cover clearly proves. But it is not only Fascist Italy that is taken into consideration, as attention also goes to the movements that stirred within the country, in the fields of esotericism and art, which act as main elements of the work. *Mithras Initiation* is a writing by Evola (re-cited by Josef K.), while *Zang Tumb Tumb* is inspired by Marinetti's eponymous work - whose sampled voice peeps several times in the song, which starts with the opening line of poem: «Every five seconds siege cannons rip the space open to the sound of tam-tuum» - and it is a tribute to Futurism, which is reiterated with a quote by the painter Carlo Carrà that seals the booklet. But this slow wandering through the decadent ideologies of the short twentieth century is not over yet. *Das Rote Werk* came out in 2012, as always on Darker Than Black, and





with *Der STAHLinistische Arbeiter*, *Rote Revolution*, *Marxistische Mysterien* it delves into the sprawling epic of Marxism and its derivations.

Freitod, also from Zurich, deserve a mention too. In 2008, they shared a split album with Menegroth and then released a long series of minor works in the wake of the most ironclad underground worship. Their black metal is well crafted, and obviously pays tribute to the classics of the genre, but it also delivers basic melodic intuitions that give a dark and epic touch to the compositions. However, it is difficult to detect a precise and overt political framework in the artistic production of these Swiss: although some concessions to NSBM are evident, they were subsequently denied by the band leader with some dubious statements. Asked about why some releases were limited to 14

or 88 copies, and if this had a political connotation, the band replied as follows:

*«You can understand 88 as homage to our origin. 88 means "Hail Helvetia"! The 14 you can understand according to "fourteen words" but rather in a political way than an occult way: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for a supreme race (the satanic race)!»<sup>9</sup>.*

Whatever the truth is, an ideological substrate is recognizable and it emerges on several occasions, although it is seemingly aligned and striving for that ideal of mass destruction, without any kind of distinction, that seems to be a recurring theme in these latitudes. *Support the Holocaust Against Humanity* and *Freitod Macht Frei* draw from a totalitarian aesthetic, along with the split album with the American band Unhuman Disease, which sees Freitod's side boasting Nazi and esoteric symbols, perfectly converging in that typical NSBM pairing: within a design that matches that of the Totenkopffring (from which they removed the swastika and the runes, to make room for the alchemical symbol of sulfur, frequently used in Satanism) and is inscribed with a goat within a pentagram. Overall, judging by the aesthetics and the presence of continuous and alternating references to esoteric Nazism, the search for an ideal comparison could lead to Australia's Spear of Longinus, openly paying tribute to with a cover of *I Am War*, the last track on *NS Occult Metal* (where NS stands however for "Neo-Satanic", at least according to the band's statements)<sup>10</sup>, which in turn quotes the infamous demo by the Australians, titled *Nazi Occult Metal*.

# England

Across the Channel in what can be considered the cradle of many counter-cultures that gained a foothold in Europe, the NSBM scene does not seem to have caught on as in other places and, more generally, has not produced any bands capable of guiding a movement.

As we have seen, there are no specific factors that determine the rise of a fringe movement devoted to National Socialist black metal, although we can still make some assumptions. Historically, England played a key role in breaking Nazi expansionism, providing logistical support to Allied troops which used the country as a launching pad for the famous Normandy landings. Moreover, England's fierce opposition in the European theater of war had already been dearly paid for at the end of 1940, when the Battle of Britain raged, and the Luftwaffe repeatedly dropped incendiary bombs in the heart of the capital... actions not earning a wealth of memories that favor the germination of totalitarian nostalgia. From an artistic point of view, in the broadest sense of the term, England was also the birthplace of great social revolts and youth subcultures, suffice it to mention punk, psychedelic and progressive rock, along with heavy metal in its early forms as postulated by Black Sabbath and the NWOBHM with the likes of Iron Maiden and Saxon. It was also the home to great occultists such as John Dee, Aleister Crowley, Austin Osman Spare and famous esoteric orders such as the Golden Dawn, in a feverish and persevering cultural agitation marked by a revolutionary spirit that seems to be part of the DNA of the lands of Albion.

All these features appear in contrast to the strict dogmas of the more traditionally conservative extreme Right, which somehow still found a way to get organized: the young and restless fringes gathered under the Blood & Honour network, which was strong enough to attract most of the dissident youth into its sphere of influence within its own territory. But the circumstances were not optimal for providing visibility and breathing space to a small underground current seeking an abnormal mixture of black metal extremism and radical ideology.

In the less than fierce English scene, Adalruna deserve to be mentioned: active since 2006, their name is taken from the book *Johannes Bureus and the Adalruna* by Stephen Edred Flowers, occultist and scholar of German history and runology. Their early work is not the most convincing, given the inconsistency of the raw black metal they offered in *Der geheime König und die schwarze Sonne* that boasts a high-sounding title in German along with well-defined and consolidated thematic references, as evidenced by titles such as *Totenkopf*, *Irminenschaft*, *Lord of the Runes* - rather obvious references to the figure of the "Himmlerian Rasputin" Karl Maria Wiligut. Such clues lead to ideological stances made even more explicit by Wulfhelm, the leader of the project:

*«I see National Socialism as the only feasible solution to the problems that we, as a race, face today. The ideals and morals expressed go hand in hand with those of the pagan belief system when treated correctly. Through paganism, the folk are more likely to have the warrior spirit awaken within themselves, feel connected to their lands of origin (not in a blindly patriotic way), and in turn, this should lead to the uprising that will be the last hope of saving our race and traditions»<sup>11</sup>.*

As a logical result of the above, Wulfhelm is a supporter of the Pagan Front and recognizes himself in that line of thought that sees paganism as a means for the awakening of a racial consciousness. But unlike other bands aligned to the same principles, Adalruna explicitly states this propaganda through lyrics only on occasion, as they more often revolve around Nordic mythology. The second album, *Cestrefeld 1362*, registers a total absence of political contents, replaced by the myths and legends of the band's place of origin: Chesterfield. This not entirely successful attempt to detach themselves from the unsophisticated black metal of the early days is a sign of a change that will continue through to their last effort, *A Wolf in Hallowed Places* (2008), after which the project is renamed in Æþelruna, thus starting a new musical path.

The last recording effort is a summation of Wulfhelm's work. The album is built around the saga of Völsungar, a work of Icelandic origin, which tells of the rise and fall of the Völsung clan. The result, far from being epic, contains a certain dose of personality and still guarantees some attention (the album came out on Darker Than Black). For the record, the last act of Adalruna is a 2 track EP titled *Geol*, which includes a cover song of the neo-Nazi German band Landser.

Perhaps more explicit, but not as prolific, Völkermord ("genocide" in German) stand out for their vigorous and fiercely claustrophobic black metal laced with Anglo-Saxon black Fascism. Although it almost went unnoticed, the debut album - *Ancient Fascists Return* (2008) - has all the ingredients to initiate them as members of the small NSBM scene across the Channel. They came back in 2009 with a split album shared with the American band Burning Blood (titled *Death Cult of the Totenkopf*), but were not heard from again.

The British underground also includes minor bands, such as Wotan's Vrede and Sturm, and even more elusive projects such as Pagan Glory, Veikkan, Unendliche Blut, Norse and Aryan Fighter, who tried to organize themselves into a network called Loki's Elite Hall, yet another imitation of the Pagan Front, aligned with the trappings of a militant and anti-Judeo-Christian paganism, that seems destined to a premature oblivion.

Albeit in a broad sense, bands that can be ascribed to NSBM, even emerge from Britain's colonial past: in the split release *Northern Southern Heritage*, the aforementioned Swiss Freitod formed a unique alliance with Volkmag, a South African one-man band led by Naam Loos that stands out not so much in the sound department, which is typical black metal with dark hues, but for the lyrics. As we have repeatedly stated, NSBM is able to adapt and remodel itself around the most diverse elements in order to pursue



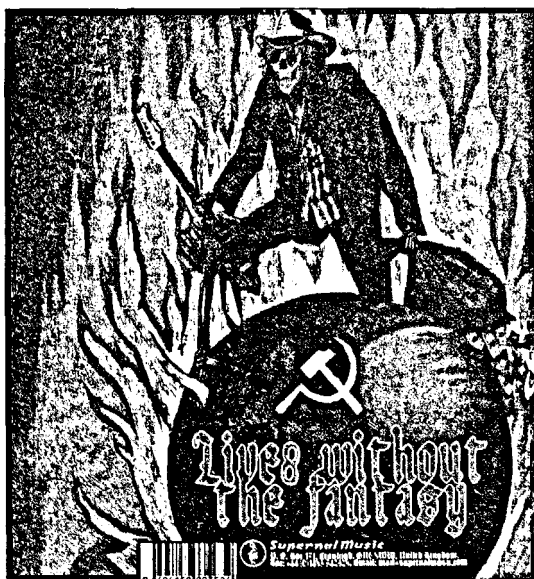
its anti-establishment battle: and although we do not find a celebration of the German Reich in the work of Naam Loos, we can still recognize a mind-set that serves as a backdrop to all the releases of the genre. The core of its work is the theme of coexistence between white and black people in the territories of the former British colony, an obviously difficult subject in a country marked first by Dutch colonization, and then by the British dominion, plus nearly fifty years of apartheid. However, Volkmag's racist stance is unambiguous and clearly expressed on the covers of

their records - especially *Op Oorlogs Vlerke* and *Keelvolk* - and in the song titles, that are all in Afrikaans, which is the language spoken by the Boers (descendants of the Dutch settlers who first arrived in today's Cape Town) that the British sought to eradicate unsuccessfully after taking possession of the colony.

Although National Socialist black metal does not seem to have found its niche, England is still home to one of the labels that has helped to spread the genre more than any other, releasing records that have made NSBM's history over the years. We are talking about Supernal Music, whose owner Alex Kurtagić has championed the work of projects like Capricornus, Fanisk, Eldrig, Sunwheel, Hate Forest, and Kataxu, as well as a broader array of bands that celebrate paganism and nationalism.

If a symbolic release is to be found in the Supernal Music catalog, it is certainly the infamous, double CD *Anti-Geldof Compilation* (2006), which gathers performances by Der Stürmer, Darkthule, Fanisk, Woods of Infinity, Astrofaes, Thesyre, and Hammer. The quality of the songs fluctuates and not all of the performances hit the mark, but this compilation has become famous, not for the musical contents, but rather for the originality





and sickle, with the inscription: «*Live 8 without the fantasy*». Obviously, this refers to the series of concert-events held in different cities around the world in 2005, called Live 8, intended to raise awareness among the G8 summit participants about the debt of poor nations. If further confirmation were needed, the compilation liner notes clear any doubts as to Kurtagić's opinion regarding these charity initiatives.

According to Kurtagić, the «*punk rocker turned capitalist*» Bob Geldof is the symbol of this pretend charity crusade, from which he gained fame and an aura of respectability. In the rich booklet, Supernal's boss also railed against those characters of pop and rock who hide nothing more than empty rhetoric and capitalist instincts behind a zest of political correctness and a progressive mentality, which in his opinion are well demonstrated by their hedonism and lifestyle made of luxuries and excesses. But beyond the concepts expressed, in the overview of the extreme music scene this (in its way) historical compilation carves out its own niche, being «*the sole extant example of engagement with current affairs and everyday politics in the black metal scene*»<sup>12</sup>.



If in some ways, the West has turned out to be an inhospitable land for NSBM, contrasted by the guardians of satanic orthodoxy and with many projects that met a premature end, it is in the East is that the phenomenon resolutely found its way, intercepting dissident ideas that manifested themselves during the years of Communism, and finally violently overflowed like water out of a collapsed dam. In Poland, as we have seen, the first large repository of ideologized black metal emerged behind the Iron Curtain; but it only represents the tip of the iceberg.



By partially distancing itself from the Nazi-satanic excesses with which it expressed itself in the West, NSBM flooded Eastern Europe by becoming more malleable and acquiring other nuances, reinventing itself in more heterodox musical forms enriched with folk sounds or the epic atmospheres of pagan metal; both of these genres have enjoyed great success in the lands from the Danube to the Urals. In the crowded black/folk/pagan/Viking scene it actually becomes very difficult to draw precise lines between openly politicized bands, mere sympathizers or those simply unaffected by the phenomenon, since the characteristic iconography of the early National Socialist black metal is invalidated, and the mere presence of words like "blood", "honor" or "homeland" in the lyrics certainly does not offer proof of a Nazi political agenda. Otherwise, half of the metal scene worldwide - in a long arc that goes from Manowar to Der Stürmer - would be charged with apology.

Having ascertained that there are elusive boundaries between these genres, NSBM is dressed up with new clothes in the East: a barbaric aesthetic replaces the martial Third Reich one, and the promotional pictures portray band members in warrior or traditional clothes more frequently than being covered with studs and greasepaint, distorted by a rigid black and white. Even the symbols are shifted, and the swastika often gives way to effigies of the Slavic tradition, such as the kolovrat, which is also a solar symbol of pagan origin used in radical and identitarian circles. From a lyrical point of view the use of themes that are dear to the pre-Christian cults is predominant, as opposed to the alien monotheistic faiths, and they replace that indistinct accumulation of esoteric Nazism mixed with Satanism that was all the rage in the original caustic NS experiments. The extreme nihilism subtended by some Nordic combos that sought the exaltation and glorification of human devastation, is replaced by a more organic vision that chooses black metal as an artistic tool to "raise awareness" towards contemporary issues, and National Socialism as the ultimate resource to deal with social decay, multiculturalism and the globalist advance led by the lobbies, with the consequent loss of identity of the people.

This vision between the apocalyptic and the paranoid brings out an interesting fact: with a certain nonchalance, National Socialism is separated from its historical context and reinterpreted as a doctrine detached from its creators. In certain cases, the Germanic supremacy sought by Hitler is substituted by a pan-Aryan vision, which includes the entire white world; the Germanic plans of subjugation of the Eastern people are replaced with an alliance project under the sign of the swastika, and any historical inconsistencies are passed over in silence or relegated to the role of mistakes never to be repeated. But contradictions are on the agenda within a movement that incorporates these and many other, often dissonant voices, making a harmonious convergence of views on such far-reaching issues unlikely. And it just so happened that Capricornus, among the leading figures in the Polish scene and among the first in the mid-Nineties to bring NS themes into black metal, released some less than accommodating statements about the prospect of a great Aryan Europe that included the Slavic populations:



*«I don't care about land of Slavs. Slavonic nation has never created any strong and powerful culture in the past, they are just servants of the great and brave Germanic tribes [...]. Personally I'm only 50% Slav... it makes me angry because I feel German neo-Nazi! I think Slavonic tribes should be enslaved and create a federation of the Eastern Reich»<sup>13</sup>.*

Similarly, there are those who renounce these utopian imperialist ideas and relate to a smaller scale reality, identifying the boundaries of their land as the last bastion to defend, thus making nationalism their creed, and putting aside matters about the purity of the race.

Regardless of the ideas that are conveyed in the records, the choice of paganism as a backbone proves to be a constant, as it provides an ideological platform connected, but not binding, to National Socialism, and is also perfectly adequate to a non-strictly political proposal that is based on more universal concepts such as anti-modernism, anti-globalization, and recovery of Tradition; while at the same time placing itself in opposition to the Christian dogma.

Caught between a rock and a hard place in the Slavic lands, with the bulky shadows of Communism still in the East and those of globalization and turbo-capitalism in the West, NSBM is reshaped and reinterpreted, proving once more that the acronym is stringent yet not always illustrative. It is little wonder then, if more than one band automatically labelled this way has distanced themselves, leveraging on the absence of a declared Nazi mark; which, incidentally, does not mean that they do not share some of its basic ideas. Again, there is a difference between how NSBM is perceived from the outside, that is, as a unique and compact movement, and the way it is perceived on the inside, where there are finer distinctions (sometimes real, sometimes simple screens to prevent accusations that might threaten a music career), and the characters involved consider only those bands that explicitly express support for the Third Reich and its ideology as part of the genre. In summary: a band can have conservative, ultra-nationalist or even anti-Semitic ideas and still not be strictly considered NSBM.

The vastness of the scene beyond the Iron Curtain is amazing, taking into account how the first dictates of black metal were acknowledged under complex conditions, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Yet this has not prevented hundreds of bands from proliferating, becoming part of a movement that is constantly changing and increasingly judged as the bearer of disturbing and distorted totalitarian shadows.

## Croatia

It is a fact that, amongst the young Slovenian and Croatian metalheads, thrash metal enjoys a dominant position compared to all the other extreme metal genres. The

audience is not so large, but over the years it has consolidated beyond the most optimistic expectations and today, nearly two decades after the end of the Yugoslav wars, there is room for all types of sound experimentation. And if it is true that Slovenia does not seem to have given birth to any explicitly NSBM bands, Croatia- perhaps due to a much deeper and stormy war experience - has witnessed more than a few ideological jolts in music.

The starting point is the city of Fiume (renamed by the Croats as Rijeka), which was the base of operations of the first full-blown National Socialist metal band in the Nineties, under the government of Zagreb: AriSSe. Advocates of claustrophobic and relentless thrash metal, despite their meager legacy (just a couple of tapes, both dating back to 1994) they are remembered even today as the forefathers of the phenomenon, in what at the time was one of the most famous non-aligned socialist Republics during the Cold War.

Nowadays, however, one of the leading NSBM Croatian bands are Wolfenhords, a project founded in the capital as a one-man band back in 2005, that quickly made itself heard through releases like *Wolves of the New Beginning* and *Pathway to Lunar Utopia*. Both albums were released in 2007, and as the frontman and leader The Nobll admitted, they are affected by the band's fascination with the style of Satanic Warmaster and Aryan Terrorism. However, the great leap forward, both in terms of quality and media impact took place with the release of their third full-length, *White Power for White People Fight* (2009), which intends to be an explicit NSBM propaganda manifesto as only a few others had previously dared to.



*The Nobll of Wolfenhords*



*«The album was highly accepted within fans of black metal, much more than two previous releases, just because of that theme and lyrics. [...] There are bands that are NS but they don't have*

*anything about NS and Hitler in their songs and some of them even deny the NSBM label and call themselves pagan metal. The best examples are of course Nokturnal Mortum, Kroda, Graveland... [...] Wolfenhords fit in the category of NS bands that show their message without hesitation»<sup>14</sup>.*

The album is drenched to the core with nationalist references and celebrations of white power, all in compliance with a black/thrash foundation where the vocals alternate between English and the native language, with direct and explicitly aggressive songs like *Zemljo Pagana, Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer* or *White World Order*. Even the excesses (in the sound department but above all in the graphic one) that accompany this call to arms do not go unnoticed, so much so that during the early years the album was distributed via unorthodox if not illegal methods.

*«[The album] it is self-released because Wolfenhords had only Europeans labels and because harsh anti-racist laws none of them were able to release it. [...] There is even a different version of cover for that album, it can be called censored version (even though it also have a swastika), it was made for purpose of easier realization but it didn't help. So that is the reason why this album can be found only as self-released CD-R or for download on various sites»<sup>15</sup>.*

The Italian label Frozen Darkness, owned by Aryan Wolf, took due care of the Croatian sapper, first with a cassette edition of the album in 88 numbered copies, and shortly after with a CD reissue limited to 500 copies (*«For 500 Aryan warriors»*, as stated inside the packaging). Frozen Darkness also released Wolfenhords' last work, the Aryan-Luciferian *The Truth Shall Set You Free* (2012). An album that The Nobll describes as: *«...experimental black/thrash metal music, and lyrics about NS spirituality and a story about ZOG's enslaving of our people and it will show the white race a way to fight it. [...] It is simply Aryan truth that will set us free from their democracy, brainwashing, equal rights, and most importantly - their governments»<sup>16</sup>.*

## Belarus

In the complicated and still unstable universe of the countries that originated from the geopolitical big bang that was the collapse and consequent splitting of the USSR, Belarus is going through a difficult process of emancipation from its uncomfortable neighbor and its controversial government situation. Even the term Belarus (which remained in use with the indomitables who would like a reunion with Russia), translated as White Russia, is not well accepted by everyone, because of the imperialist traces it carries. On the domestic side, however, the demise of Communism has allowed the Eastern Orthodox Church to regain ground becoming by far the first religion of the nation.



*Algkult, Sturm's vocalist*

A national identity to rebuild, and Christianity on the rise: two elements that can definitely fuel the NSBM fire. In fact, Belarus proves to be the source of a vast array of bands adhering to ideological black metal, albeit often expressed in the form of pagan metal with nationalist and racist connotations. Therefore, we go from explicit examples of Nazi propaganda, like that of the all-too-typical Panzerterror SS or Blackmoon Warrior 88, to the less blatant Dies Nefastus.

A fine example of "war black metal" with unambiguous content - such as the Celtic cross screen-printed on the disc and the photo with a Hitler quote under the tray leaving no room for doubt - is provided by Šturm, who recorded only one demo in 1997, *Aryjski Sturm*, and another tape, *Ultra*, which were then reissued on a retrospective CD including

all of their previously published material. The sonic assault of the Belarusian band is marked by cold and ruthless black metal that refers to early Darkthrone and the rougher Scandinavian school, on which hymns related to warrior pride and the nobility of blood are screamed at the top of their lungs. But if the lyrics seem to approach the subject from a more idealistic angle, the words of the singer Algkult take us back to the more practical everyday reality in Belarus:

*«We reap the fruits of democracy and capitalism. That's why a lot of youth are very deep in the nationalism or National Socialism. When we lived in Communist state I couldn't see the niggers or other Asiatic beings here. Fuck we got a lot of Asian scum here now. Three years ago two guys and I were arrested for the attack on the Pakistanies, but the policemen were loyal to us and they exempted us»<sup>17</sup>.*

In its elementary and rough attitude, *Ultra* remains a little NSBM manifesto, the son of radical black metal and not aligned with the vast progeny of pagan/folk metal bands with racial content.

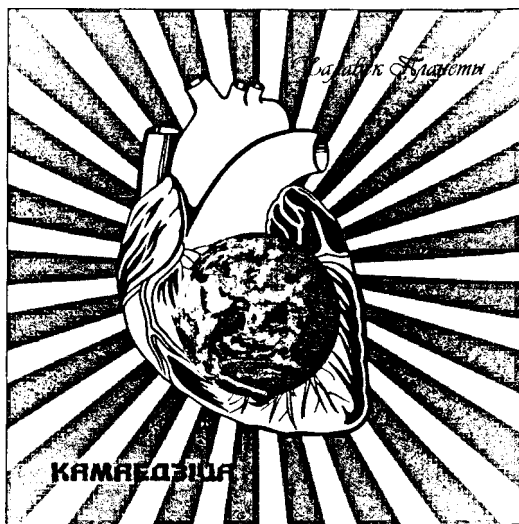
The latter vein includes PD SS Totenkopf (which stands for Panzer Division SS Totenkopf, named after a German armored division that operated mainly on the Eastern Front), who stand out for a single full-length titled *Ljasnyja Braty*, a heterogeneous collection of songs that already appeared on their demo, as well as some unreleased tracks and a cover of *Stahl Blitzt Kalt* by Absurd. The band's strong nationalism does not fail to also manifest itself in the following split release with Russia's Wewelsburg, *The Apostles of Ragnarock*, where the songs - *Belarus Over All* in particular - suffer from some RAC influences that feed the mixture of black metal and folk melodies.



The cover of *Ideology* by Apraxia

the god of thunder Perun, to that of the sun Dazhbog, then Chernobog, Svarog and Yarilo ending with Kharachun, the god of death.

1999 finds them releasing what will become their iconic album: *Ideology*. With a cover that leaves little to the imagination, a style that relies even more on epic melodies, and lyrics that are less and less equivocal - «*Defending the supremacy of my race, sacred war has begun*»<sup>18</sup> - the combo earned the leadership of the Belarusian scene and intensified its connections with other areas of the extreme Right<sup>19</sup>. The last album, *Kolovrat*, dates back to 2003, before the split release *Voice of Blood* certified the cessation of activities with the moniker Apraxia and the adoption of the name Molot (the other band appearing on the split album were, in fact, exactly the same musicians), resulting in a stylistic move towards RAC with vague metal reminiscences, that became increasingly evident in their later works. Apraxia also participated in a double tribute compilation titled *14 1/2 Years of Struggle Against...* which brought together a large group of bands, some from beyond the local area, that ranged from black metal to folk, and from RAC to NSBM, as further evidence of how thin the boundaries are between genres. The manifestation of political belief is not always revealed by certain obvious symbols, but can instead be nestled in less explicit details.



The cover of *The Man of the Planet* by Kamaedzitca

A band called Kamaedzitca stands out within the compilation, as they are certainly one of the most peculiar and curious groups ever to arise from the entire ideological underground, and not just the Belarusian one. The band, which takes its name from a local ancestral festivity known as the "awakening of the bear", first juggled with acceptable classic pagan metal, far from the Scandinavian ancestors and inspired by traditional sounds - an alchemy personalized by singing in their native language, which makes the album sound more original, even when certain stylistic forms are not. The first two records earned



*Kamaedzitca's propaganda picture  
in NS/straight edge style*

them some credibility, but it was with *Loyalty* that Kamaedzitca (now reduced to a duo) took a surprising turn both musically - opening to new ambient, folk and even rock influences - and philosophically, placing Nazi derived racial consciousness and straight edge ideas side by side with paganism; an almost paradoxical marriage if we consider the punk roots of the line of thought theorized by Ian McKaye<sup>20</sup>. Artsem, the band's guitar and bass player gives an accurate explanation, peppered with controversial ideas:

*«They are the parts of the one common thing. [...] straight edge is a way, an endless way to the superman, which never ends or ceases, because when you have passed a certain point then you realize your own new disadvantages, which must be beaten by yourself in the future or you will fall as a loser, being a grey everyman forever. Paganism is a thing which lives deep inside each of us, in our essence; it's our kin memory, loyalty, honour and devotion, the readiness to sacrifice your life for the sake of getting higher aims. National Socialism is a struggle for justice in this pale world of lies and falseness. It is the war for revival of racial and national self-conscience in minds of the youth. It is the war for independence, for rebirth of traditions, culture and moral shape of each race and nation despite the colour of skin, religion or ideology. Having spliced these definitions together we can see a full worldview of the true white man»<sup>21</sup>.*

This decidedly unorthodox interpretation refers to the ideas of David Myatt on National Socialism as a doctrine now free from its original historical context, becoming a new and autonomous philosophy. As further confirmation of a comprehensive



Luty, Kamaedzitca's vocalist

*Weltanschauung*, the videos posted by the band show some members of this "straight edge-Nazi community" intent on training for combat, distributing flyers in parks, throwing cigarette packets and bottles of alcohol in the trash, etc..

Overall, if musically speaking, Kamaedzitca fit into the long trail of black metal bands with folk streaks, it is their bold ideas that bring them out of the crowd, demonstrating a marked distancing from the original paradigm that saw the combination between

black metal and National Socialism as an attempt to exaggerate a destructive satanic concept.

## Ukraine

Ukraine has a thriving extreme scene that has hit the headlines in recent years, thanks to the work of undoubtedly skilled bands that also have controversial ideological views. In a rather varied underground, there are three names that have gained the most respect and approval of the public: Drudkh, Nokturnal Mortum and Kroda.

Drudkh have a fairly linear story behind them. The result of the common efforts of some musicians already active in the underground with other bands such as Hate Forest, Astrofaes and Blood of Kingu, the combo lined up four works of great artistic value released on Alex Kurtagić's Supernal Music (for many, an alarming signal of political affiliation). *Forgotten Legends*, *Autumn Aurora*, *The Swan Road*, and *Blood in Our Wells* are four authentic black metal gems released in as many years, the result of an inspired musical attitude which uses some elements of the Burzum sound and mixes them with a sophisticated folk vein, a cross section of dilated and dreamy atmospheres in which nature appears as the true protagonist.



The band's almost non-existent promotional activity (no pictures, concerts, or interviews) and some contingent factors - such as the militancy in other bands considered troublesome - led to some speculation as to possible ideological affiliation. These assumptions easily caught fire on the Internet, and were powered by the band's persistent silence, as they would not release any clarifying statements on this issue. But what exactly blemishes Drudkh's biography? First, the connection of guitarist Roman Saenko with the now disbanded Hate Forest, a group that can be easily traced back to philosophies relevant to the extreme Right, due to their ideas and themes<sup>22</sup>. Second, the slogan printed on a t-shirt of the band, which read «Art for

*white intellectual elite*». Additional suspicions arose after the release of their masterpiece album, *Blood in Our Wells*, dedicated to the politician Stepan Bandera, creator of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Nazi collaborator for a short time<sup>23</sup>.

Excluding Saenko's political ideas from the list of considerations - which we cannot know in detail, given the absence of any statements - and only observing the material released by the band, the label "NSBM" seems rather out of place for Drudkh (although politically ambiguous, they at most have a strong nationalist sentiment). The only result of this hasty categorization was the Ukrainians being boycotted for a long time by many glossy metal magazines, a matter later suspiciously resolved after the band was signed by the influential French label Season of Mist, a move that also saw them abandoning questionable historical references in their later works.

Things are slightly more complex with Kroda, who have established themselves as one of the most outstanding bands in the pagan/black metal scene in recent years. The rapid rise of the combo consequently attracted the attention of anti-Fascist organizations,



*Eisenslav of Kroda*



alerted by some of their statements and some dangerous collaborations, particularly with Russia's Velimor (a band orbiting around the infamous Blazebirth Hall, which will be discussed in the next chapter) and one with Oprich, which stands out because of a haunting aesthetic detail: in the photo inside the booklet, Kroda's lead singer is wearing a shirt with an eagle and a swastika on it. A certain proximity to the Pagan Front should be added to the list of uncomfortable references that have not gone unnoticed.

But the obstructionism against Kroda went from typical threats on the Internet to a more determined boycott action: in 2006, members of the Polish anti-Fascist movement attacked the band in Warsaw during a mini-tour while they were getting ready for a show. Their instruments were destroyed and the series of concerts came to a premature end. As a result of these facts, the ensemble released a lengthy and defiant statement, in which, among other things, they firmly took their distance from NSBM:

*«It seems antifa don't know what is NSBM, if they use this stereotype towards our band. NSBM are bands like Der Stürmer or Thor's Hammer, for example; i.e. formations where basic themes are political and social aspects, aesthetics of Third Reich etc. But Kroda (even purely stylistics-wise) is pagan metal. In difference from NSBM, in pagan metal (just look at the name, it's obvious) there's no political component. Lyrical side of pagan metal is antiquity, traditionalism, ancestral roots pride. [...] And still we want to say that our group is OUT of modern politics [...] If that brainless goblins consider scientific terms "Aryan" and "race" associated with "Fascism", if traditional European runes and sunwheels are "Nazism" - so let them not even try to discuss the themes of black and pagan metal at all»<sup>24</sup>.*

Kroda's past is certainly not immaculate, and although there is not explicitly National Socialist propaganda on their records, a certain reaction to the use of specific symbols has to be expected, not to mention that statements issued to the press leave little doubt

as to the band's political vision. It is also interesting to note their perspective on the question of nationalism, which is emblematic of the thesis supported in various areas of the Slavic world:



*Kroda's logo*

*«First of all, we are Aryans, secondly - we are Rus people, and then - we're Ukrainians. Got the consequence? The root is most important thing! The rest is just cultural difference»<sup>25</sup>.*

We have already explained how there is a tendency to include anything that might hide a veiled ideological reference in the term NSBM, and this is even more the case in Eastern Europe where, as we said, the boundaries between genres have faded. In a short article published by the British magazine *Zero Tolerance*, which speaks of the intervention of anti-Fascist movements in the extreme metal scene, the reporter Cormac O'Síocháin made some interesting observations on the circumstances that led to this confrontation. Starting from his personal experience, which led him to argue with some activists because he was wearing a Horna t-shirt (another band accused of Nazism and added to various black lists, despite their denials), the author points out that the youth of the radical Left have targeted Eastern black metal as a newborn receptacle for political ideas of the extreme Right, ready to explode after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

For O'Síocháin, the anti-Fascist movement has quickly gone from theoretical idealism to practical hooliganism, with clear censorship intents, risking serious damage to the underground. They prefer the so-called *no platform approach*<sup>26</sup> to peaceful opposition, which has the purpose of preventing any contact of those who are identified as part of the extreme Right with the public, in order to avoid new converts that may arise after being exposed to their ideas (even in the form of music). But as it happens, in black metal, the line between provocation and political agenda is very thin, and the end result is a random attack towards a scene that should be studied more in-depth. If it is true that Kroda cannot plead completely innocent regarding the allegations that have been levelled against them, the risk is that the simple use of themes related to paganism may be considered a necessary and sufficient condition to make the band guilty of Nazi sympathies and therefore a target. In this case, the cure would not be better than the disease.

Even more controversial, if not openly aligned, are Nokturnal Mortum, devoted from the very beginning to symphonic black metal that gradually became contaminated with National Socialism. Their early works actually show a fascination with the occult and its dark universe, with obvious song titles (*Black Moon Overture* or *Return of the Vampire Lord*) that seem perfectly contiguous to the romantic tradition in vogue within the more melodic fringe of black metal. The first suspicions about a peremptory change of pace arise with the album *Ne-Christ*, in which a certain anti-Semitic fervor emerges for the first time without any ambiguity:

*«Spit in jewish faces, cut them into pieces  
Let them choke with their lie  
Let the woods grow up on their corpses only white man's power!»<sup>27</sup>*

The album also consists of 88 tracks: after the first 9 songs there are, in fact, 78 tracks of ambient sounds before the final song *Perun's Celestial Silver*, taken from the *Lunar Poetry* demo. Suspicions become certainty when looking at their now defunct website, hosted in the virtual space of the Pagan Front, in which the words *«Aryan Black Metal»* stood out. Also, in the section dedicated to in-depth examinations, there was a clearly racist,



*Nokturnal Mortum, Ne-Christ era*

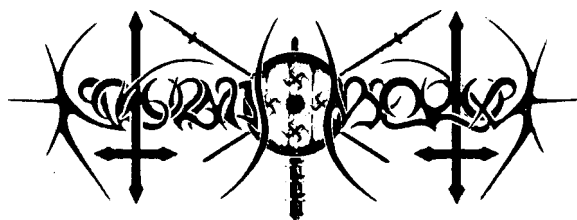
pseudo-scientific text titled *Whites & Blacks 100 Facts (and one Lie)*, which is rather widespread in white supremacist circles. If circumstantial evidence was not enough, confirmation was spelled out in the words of the band leader, Knjaz Varggoth:

*«Vrolak (former guitarist) is also a member of Runes of Diancebt. They play the same style of music as Nokturnal Mortum: National Socialistic black metal [...] In the past we burned down churches. Nowadays we're more into political movements against subpeople»<sup>28</sup>.*

Varggoth has also lent his musical skills to internationally known side projects such as Warhead, a band born on the Polish-Ukrainian axis that also involved Olaf Jasiński, who was a key member of the skinhead band Honor which had already crossed metal territories with an infamous split album with Graveland. In about six years of activity, Warhead churned out three full-lengths with lyrics and song titles that leave little room for ambiguous interpretations: *Defenders of the Blood*, *Aryan Nation's Rebirth*, *Blood, Race and Nation*.

In 2002, it was the turn of an even more controversial side project with an unequivocal name and output: Aryan Terrorism. Fueled by the first batch of NSBM released by the American label Resistance Records in early 2000, their only album, *War*, offers black metal smeared with RAC where the lyrics, all sung in English, are a collection of invectives whose targets are unlikely to surprise the listener. In this sense, the titles are quite explicit and direct: *Jewish Provocation*, *Total War*, *Destroy the Church of Christ*, *Our Banner - Swastika!*, *A National Socialistic Call...* added to it all, is a booklet stuffed with the inevitable propaganda (past and present: see for example the words and images of solidarity in favor of Hendrik Möbus, who was then held in a U.S. prison).

Turning back to the activities of the main band, the good quality but inadequately produced, symphonic black metal of the early days underwent a slow transformation over the years, by encountering the sounds of pagan metal, that were already thoroughly



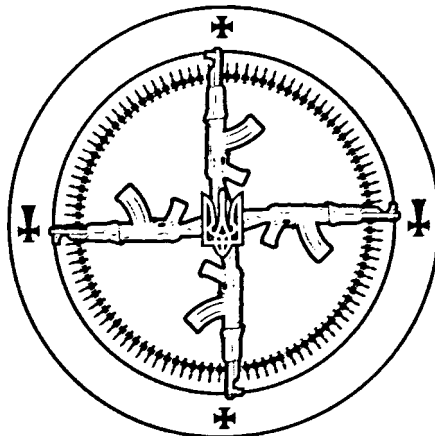
*A variation of the Nokturnal Mortum logo used in the Ne-Christ era*



explored by countless other East European bands, but seem to be an apparently unavoidable landing mark for every black metal band beyond the Iron Curtain. The convergence of these sounds is summed up in *Weltanschauung* (2005) that, starting from the cover, depicts an atmosphere far removed from the classical image of corpse paint and studs adopted hitherto. The lyrics are far from the demonic gorges of their youth and delve into supremacist themes instead, calling on the once failed unity between Slavs and Germans. There are also the usual raw attacks - in this case very explicit - addressed toward the Jewish race: the phrase «If they weren't burnt those 60 years ago they should be burnt today»<sup>29</sup> seems to call for a new Holocaust. There are also references to the "14 Words" by David Lane that seem to certify a career proudly devoted to NSBM, albeit revised and corrected.

But, as often happens, Varggoth had an epiphany, and he corrected his aim not long after the release of *Weltanschauung*, launching into what looks like a hasty retreat from the front:

*«We have certain views but I would like to say that I never saw Nokturnal Mortum as a political band. People say that some of my views have a political orientation. It's shit. Now I'm not interested in any politic currents. Nokturnal Mortum art is not intended for solution of modern society problems. First of all I make all for me. As politics is social phenomenon, so my music is initially apolitical. Nokturnal Mortum is like a mirror, reflection of negative of modern life. We show it. It can agree with views of some political figures, but it's not politics»<sup>30</sup>.*



Although it is everyone's inalienable right to change their mind, turn the page and make a clean sweep of their ideas, the attempt to re-read his own unmistakable past with a revisionist tone seems out of place in Varggoth's words, a less than credible operation in all respects. Whatever the reasons behind this resolute change of perspective, it should be acknowledged that the creativity of the band did not suffer from it, and as a matter of fact, their last effort *The Voice of Steel*, is an album of

extraordinary freshness and evocative power, made of epic and warlike sounds, though now devoid of any ideological drifts.

Dub Buk came out from the inexhaustible forge of Ukrainian pagan metal, members of an underground scene less exposed to critical acclaim than the big names we just mentioned. The band boasts above average musical skill, but also questionable political inclinations that are revealed without remorse in interviews. These affiliations emerge with even more clarity in the work of their side-project called Ungern, which released only two albums, so far, (*1 Litre of Blood* and *Shambala*<sup>31</sup>) in the spirit of bare and basic black metal that is not devoid of effective ideas. In particular, the second album, with

songs like *Bible Bastard* and *Hail Happy Holocaust* (with its collection of German military marches and «Sieg Heil!»), makes the band's political sympathies much more obvious, and the choice of using a photo of Guido von List for the cover<sup>32</sup> and one of Rudolf Hess in the inner graphics only confirms their orientation, as well as their interest in esoteric Nazism. The origin of the name is quite different, as it refers to the enigmatic Baron Roman Nicolaus von Ungern-Sternberg (1885 - 1921), a Russian military



man of Germanic origins who fought bitterly against the Bolshevik advance in the aftermath of the October Revolution<sup>33</sup>. The figure of the Baron, while surrounded by an aura of legend, is not among the best known to the general public, but it perfectly embodies the archetype of the nationalist fighter, anti-Communist and anti-Semitic, balanced between the earthly and the supernatural world. All these elements go along with NSBM and guarantee a bit of originality to Ungern, a necessary element if a band is to emerge in a scene that already has a large number of competitors.



*A rare picture of baron von Ungern-Sternberg*

## Bulgaria



*Okupator of 88*

At the edge of the European continent, in the easternmost part of the Balkan peninsula overlooking the Black Sea, Bulgaria boasts a minor but no less fierce scene dedicated to NSBM. Among the bands, which in truth can be counted on one hand, and are all of fairly recent formation, Gaskammer (authors of a split album titled *Death Camp/Afrocalypse* with Negrobutter, a side-project of Aryan Blood), Stürm Kommand and Paganblut are the names that stand out.

The project that exceeds any other responds to the programmatic name of



88. Embodying the spirit of the most relentless NSBM, they flaunt the entire aesthetic arsenal in such a redundant manner that it results in an involuntary ridiculousness, with a logo consisting of two tilted swastikas placed side by side, devoid of some arms. Formed in 2006, they immediately cut their teeth following the usual procedure consisting of demos, split albums and EPs (many of them released on a local label, Acclaim Records) to mark their presence in an area that does not boast a long standing tradition in National Socialist black metal. The propaganda imprint that in-

fects the productions of the Bulgarian group is among the most ferocious and surreal, a constant storm of images and symbols devoted to one and only one purpose: the exaltation of Adolf Hitler. Much of their early material is now completely unobtainable, and consists of tapes distributed in 88 copies - obviously - based on basic, raw black metal focused on sharp and repetitive guitar riffs. Titles such as *Bulgaria Mit Hitler Exterminating the Subhuman Dust*, *Kommunistik Terrorism*, *Your Mind Belongs To Adolf Hitler*, *Jewsus (Anti-sem)* do not require complicated analysis in search of hermetic meanings or subtexts: no eccentric millenarian philosophy is found here, but rather brutal dedication to the Third Reich. It is not known if such ferocity is determined by their origin, but it is possible to offer two hypotheses: the first is that their Balkan origin, not exactly the center of what is commonly considered the "Aryan world", pushes the band to exaggerate the brutality of their music and use visual excesses, as a demonstration of an unwavering faith; the second is that the brief alliance that saw Bulgaria stand at the side of Hitler's Germany constitutes a pass through which it is possible to reach full identification with National Socialist ideology. Whatever the reasons, 88 continued undeterred in their destructive work, in certain cases improving their black metal which, without ever becoming indispensable (quite the opposite), is noteworthy for some vaguely melodic elements that emerge from the shapeless chaos of the songs. Over the years they struck up several alliances, lining up a series of collaborations with well-known and lesser known names of the NSBM universe: the ever-present Italian combo Via Dolorosa, and their compatriots Iron Youth 88, Brazil's Seges Findere (with whom they shared a split album called *United By White Terror Propaganda*) until the best-known collaboration titled *BulgAryan-Southern Radikal War Propaganda* with South American Ravendark's Monarchal Canticle and Uriburu, in addition to fellow compatriots Sturm Kommand. The five tracks written by 88 do not show any type of stylistic variation and the only perceptible difference is in a slightly cleaner production.

To celebrate almost five years of activity, they released a compilation CD titled *Ultimate Aryan Warfront* in 2010, which draws heavily from the band's fractional production, lining



up many of their "classic" songs. But this work does not just have an excessive title; the lay-out is a spree of eagles, swastikas, barbed wire, bullets, black suns and concentration camp's watchtowers, piled and stacked in artwork that contains nearly lysergic effects because of its monochromatic chaos. The music is basically overshadowed by the almost pathological emphasis with which symbols, names and effigies of various kinds are flaunted, in search of an extremism that desires to be especially lyrical and iconographic. Perhaps this is the main distinction of this clandestine combo, demonstrating how even at the gates of the Middle East, the Nazi specter has its (atypical) followers.

The work of compatriots Aryan Art is on an entirely different level, in spite of a name that does not stand out for its originality and discretion. The band has faced an interesting conceptual path, reaching a rather original thesis for a group commonly associated with NSBM. Formed in 2001, they debuted with the demo *...For Total Extermination...*, an altogether negligible experiment, peppered with high-sounding as well as fanciful proclamations, and affected by the inevitable naivety of a first release. Alexander Ivanov, the sole owner of the project (although various comrades in arms have been alternating at his side over the years) brought about stylistic changes that made Aryan Art's musical proposal progressively distinguishable, while also taking distance from typical National Socialist black metal themes. The signs of this slow metamorphosis were already noticeable in the debut dated 2005 *...I Vpreki Vsichko, Blgarija She Prebde (...And Despite All, Bulgaria Will Survive)*, which abandons the excesses of the demo and focuses on topics such as the past history of Bulgaria and its nationalist impulses. A clear example of the new lyrical direction is found in the song *Imeon*, which refers to Monte Imeon, the old name of a region in Central Asia inhabited in ancient times by nomadic proto-Bulgarian populations who then migrated westward and became permanent in the territories of present day Bulgaria: gone are the claims of extermination in favor of the legacies of ancient warrior populations of Indo-European descent. Later works follow the same direction, and special mention should be given to the EP *Toy Koyto Padne Boi Za Svoboda, Toi Ne Umira...* - which is dedicated to Hristo Botev (1848 - 1876), a Bulgarian poet and national hero who fought against the Ottoman occupation - and the last release *...I Berem Plodovete Na Nasheto Nehajstvo*, probably the most comprehensive record of the band, which is able to get away from the dictates of black metal and incorporate foreign influences, thus expanding the structure and giving it all an



Alexander, leader of Aryan Art





Hristo Botev

*other labels, zines and bands made everything look like "Hollywood Nazis"! I'm 100% sure that the Zion has already put its hand in the NS movements*<sup>34</sup>.

epic aura that is well suited to the rough sound of the guitars.

To further emphasize their distancing from NSBM, the band has dubbed its own style Nationalistic BulgAryan Black Metal, and released a number of statements that contrast with what we have seen happening in this scene so far, where there are divisions but the differences are often ironed out in support of the fight towards a common enemy. Alexander is not afraid to go against the status quo of the militant underground:

*«I'm disgusted with the NS trend today. Many childish and clownish attitudes, many people with polished brains, many absurd and ignorance. [...] The trend nowadays only desecrates the idea and if there are honest bands and hordes they look like shit because of the others. The Pagan Front and some*

This is probably the only case in which a band affiliated to the extreme Right has lashed out with such vehemence against what is considered the only effective organization founded within the radical scene. Namely the Pagan Front, which boasts countless imitators and under whose banner, fundamental names in the history of the genre have gathered. Criticism also goes out to Blood & Honour and other similar networks, hideaways for idle hooligans, and alcoholics in search of street brawls and cheap beer. In addition to this lapidary judgment of the National Socialist scene, the stance towards Satanism is no less critical, stigmatized as yet another invention of the Zionist manipulators to feed to young rebels.

On their tenth anniversary of activity, a statement appeared on Aryan Art's website which incorporated, expanded and articulated their position against the tide that had already been expressed elsewhere. The text was a long attack on the foundations of NSBM and, more generally, on any purported European Supremacism, be it spiritual or moral: the Western civilization is viewed as adverse to what should be humane and spiritual, and supported by dogmas, rules, and classes; similarly, black metal adapted itself to this situation proposing, in a reduced scale, the same dogmas, the same materialistic logic, and the same social dynamics. The incessant use of the term "Aryan" and the use of fallen symbols by a group of social network warriors who hide their identity, translates into the worst stereotype of youth subculture and is quite at odds with the claimed superiority of values it purports.

Moving backwards, Alexander shows how Europe itself is the cradle of a decadent civilization, even before the alleged enemy invasion or spiritual colonization. It is here that perspective is completely inverted:

*«The paradox goes on a level that the ones, which many of you call “subhumans”, in fact carry the noble values and way of life you pretend to praise and try to follow and fight for. Inferior negros in Africa, mongoloids and yellows in the jungles and the steppes of Asia and so called “primitive Indians”... they all carry this warrior spirit, this spiritual way of life in harmony with the nature and the universe, the noble actions and for sure – not slaves of materialism, technical achievements, nowadays society's moral, principles and stereotypes or the Abrahamic monotheistic religions. All what you “hail”, but will never achieve – they have for centuries!»<sup>35</sup>.*

Therefore, if on one hand the now corrupt European model expands on a large scale, affecting the countries in the Far East and colonizing the few remaining ancient tribal cultures through capitalism and exploitation, then the same marketing mechanisms are hurting black metal from the inside. Bent to the commercial logic of supply and demand and now closely interconnected to a market system, it becomes subject to fads and the focus of interests that are far from artistic. The much vaunted fight to defend underground values is doomed to fail if the mentality of those who are involved does not change first, and the same reasoning is applicable to any other conflict, including the fight against Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. According to the leader of Aryan Art, the system cannot be defeated if those who fight it, first bend to its rules and succumb to its flattery.

*«That's why we are the main problem and not the “enemies”, which are again a fruit of ourselves and our society! Yes, it is so easy to hate niggers or yellows. It is so easy to blame the Jews for everything. Always somebody else has to be guilty for the hard times of the “Aryan warrior”. The truth is that the so-called “enemies” just take advantage... with our materialism, interests and beliefs, we prepared for them good soil on which they can grow and harvest good fruits»<sup>36</sup>.*

These are definitely countertrend ideas, and in truth, they show a degree of thought and reflection that is not typical of many of the more radical members of the NSBM scene, who are so immersed in the ideology that they do not ever look for an alternative analysis of reality. In this sense, we must acknowledge that Aryan Art have developed their own articulate vision, highly debatable in some of its axioms, but quite unique in the panorama of ideological extreme metal.

## Notes:

1 - Excerpt from the song *Europa: The Gates Of Heaven* by Death in June.

2 - Aryan Kampf 88, from *To Win or To Die* n.1, 2010.

## BLACK SHADOWS OVER EUROPA

3 - Ibid.

4 - Excerpt from a review of the band's anthology album *The First Decade 1989-1999*, from *Fighting Breed* 3, 2000.

5 - Eisenwinter, from *Psicoterror* n.5, 1998.

6 - Popular Japanese manga series (and later anime) which was a huge success in the Nineties, taking up some characteristic traits of Japanese pop culture, including the classic sailor uniform that is worn by the protagonists in the series, hence the name *Sailor Moon*.

7 - The song mentions the rambling and picturesque Giuliano Bignasca, Swiss politician and president of the League of Ticino known for his stance against illegal immigration and the Italian frontier work, he came to the limelight for his excessive ways.

8 - Eisenwinter, from *Sturmglanz* (<http://sturmglanz.de>), June 2012.

9 - Freitod, from *Behest* 'zine n.9, 2012.

10 - Ibid.

11 - Adalruna, from *Heathen Harvest* ([www.heathenharvest.com](http://www.heathenharvest.com)), October 2008.

12 - A. Kurtagić, *Black Metal: Conservative Revolution in Modern Popular Culture*, from *The Occidental Quarterly* ([www.toqonline.com](http://www.toqonline.com)), April 2010.

13 - Capricornus, from *Holocaust* n.8, 1995.

14 - Wolfenhords, from *Der Wehrwolf* n.2, 2010.

15 - Wolfenhords, from *Satan's Sadist* n.88, September 2010/January 2011.

16 - Ibid.

17 - Šturm, from *Wallachian Tyrant* n.4, Autumn 2003.

18 - Excerpt from the Apraxia song *True Sacred War*.

19 - On February 27, 2002 members of Apraxia actively collaborated with the local skinhead phalanx to organize Kolovrat's gig, one of the most famous Russian RAC bands. The show counted around 130 participants and Apraxia opened the evening (*Kolovrat, Live - Winter 2001/2002*, from *RAC* n.8, 2002).

20 - Straight edge is a youth subculture born in the hardcore punk scene and based on the rejection of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and more generally of the dissolute and self-destructive lifestyle promoted by punk. Ian MacKaye's Minor Threat were the ones who dictated the guidelines in their song titled *Straight Edge*. The symbol "X", occurring in the straight edge iconography, originated during a tour of the Teen Idles, MacKaye's first band. The members had to perform in a venue that served alcohol but were not old enough to drink, so they agreed to draw a large "X" on the back of their hands to be recognized and to avoid being served alcohol.

21 - Kamaedzita, from *Bes webzine* (<http://beswebzine.eu>), April 2012.

22 - In the booklet of *The Most Ancient Ones*, the band call themselves «*True Aryan Black Metals*» while the cover of the compilation *Nietzscheism* is entrusted to a sculpture by Arno Breker, historical artist of the Reich.

23 - Controversial and certainly of a radical political inclination (during the war his group of activists was behind numerous killings of Polish citizens), his affiliation with Nazi Germany seems the result of an opportunistic logic devoted to researching an ally against the Russian enemy. His relations with the Reich also proved to be rather erratic: in 1941, taking advantage of the Soviet retreat, he proclaimed the independence of Ukraine, but was then interned as a political prisoner in the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, where he remained until his release in 1944, when the outcome of the conflict was already clear. In desperate need of auxiliary forces, the Germans tried to patch up the alliance with Bandera and his nationalist front, but he refused. Instead, he continued to lead the battle against the Soviets even after the war, until his death in 1959, killed by a KGB gunman in Monaco, where he had been living for a while.

24 - Kroda, *Witch-hunt and holy inquisition?!*, press release following the events in Warsaw, June 2009.

25 - Ibid.

26 - «We do anti-Fascism from the "No Platform" approach, which means we don't allow Fascists (or others on the far right) to have a public say. To do so is to allow a victory for Fascists, as they get a chance to get their message out to the audience or organize in a community and possibly make some new contacts. We don't prefer to peacefully protest, we shut events down or prevent them from happening in the first place», from Anti-Racist Action (<http://antiracistaction.org/>), June 2011.

27 - Excerpt from the song *The Call of Aryan Spirit* by Nokturnal Mortum.

28 - Nokturnal Mortum, from Firegoat ([www.firegoat.com](http://www.firegoat.com)), November 2001.

29 - Excerpt from the song *The Taste of Victory* by Nokturnal Mortum.

30 - Nokturnal Mortum, from Frost magazine n.3, winter 2006.

31 - Shambala, in the Buddhist tradition, is the name of a mythical realm of spiritual perfection that should be located in Central Asia. In the West, where it is often confused/connected to the myth of Agartha and the Hollow Earth, it has become famous among esoteric circles, also arousing the interest of the Nazis in their many expeditions to Tibet.

32 - The image of Von List is only on the CD version released on Battlelord Productions.

33 - For years a thorn in the side of both the red troops (revolutionary) and the white ones (monarchist), the two warring factions during the Russian Civil War, Baron Ungern-Sternberg was surrounded by strange legends due to his eccentricity. Anti-democratic to the core, Buddhist, clearly anti-Semitic and fascinated by Eastern mysticism, he became a warlord feared for his ruthlessness, earning the epithet "bloody baron". Once he abandoned the Russian lands he founded a small army with which he fought the Chinese in Mongolia until he conquered the capital. Proclaiming himself the reincarnation of Genghis Khan and determined to create a Lamaist theocracy that would include the whole of Asia, a new traditional kingdom from which to launch the revenge against the enemies who were advancing from the West, Ungern-Sternberg was finally defeated by a Bolshevik contingent and sentenced to death by firing squad.

34 - Aryan Art, from Ghost Kommand n.1, March 2007.

35 - Aryan Art, from the press release published on the official website ([www.einsatzkommando.org/aryanart](http://www.einsatzkommando.org/aryanart)), August 2011.

36 - Ibid.

88

1955

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# Slava!

## Winds of revolt in the shadow of the Urals

«PEOPLE MUST BELIEVE WE KNOW WHAT WE WANT... WE'LL PROCLAIM DESTRUCTION... WHY, WHY AGAIN IS THIS LITTLE IDEA SO FASCINATING? WE'LL SPREAD FIRES... WE'LL SPREAD LEGENDS... THERE'LL BE AN UPHEAVAL SUCH AS THE WORLD HAS NEVER SEEN»<sup>1</sup>

[FÉDOR MICHAJLOVIČ DOSTOEVSKI]

«**Y**ou won't get to the Volga, Stalingrad resists!», sang the historic Italian Oil band Erode. And in fact, Stalingrad not only resisted, in its ice fortress lashed by the cold winter, but it marked the beginning of the end for the Third Reich, weakened by a two-front war and crippled by the harsh climatic conditions which acted as a backdrop to the battles of that fateful period. But history, as we know, is mocking and always presents the bill in the most unusual ways. That ghost which victoriously went around Europe was destined to capitulate too, slowly but surely, after a long Cold War. The netting of Communism definitely failed the night of November 9, 1989, when thousands of people poured out in the streets following a press conference where it was announced that the citizens of East Berlin could cross the Iron Curtain. From there to the final decline of the USSR was a short step, and in 1991, the Soviet state, with the separation of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, officially became a matter for the historians.

Having escaped from the gears of Communism only to be hit by a rampant capitalism, eager to continue its run towards the East, Russia had to adapt quickly to the mechanisms of what has since become the central pivot of the Western development: a free market. The new course carries its difficulties: a middle class that is dramatically enriched, increasing the social gap and triggering the discontent of the lower classes, along with immigration, corporatist interests and multinationals attracted by new frontiers of investment. As history teaches us, in times of institutional instability, it is the more radical forces that gain consensus, therefore the most extreme ideas will breach the weakened Soviet social fabric.

No wonder then that Russia is now home to a thriving variety of extreme Right factions, which on one hand, reclaim their cultural heritage against the speculation and the Americanization of their traditions, identified as a different but always pernicious form of domination; while on the other, they rebel against a life under the Communist yoke, embracing the faith of their historic enemy, in a relentless battle against one and all; the State, the Church, the immigrants, the West, and even their own past. If the established



Blood & Honour network has quickly taken root in the shadow of the Kremlin - not to mention a vast progeny of neo-Nazi groups that, following the footsteps of a philosophy made up of petty chauvinism and intolerance, spread violence by the handfuls towards any minority - academic personalities such as Aleksandr Dugin have also emerged in the extreme Right milieu, who recently came to the fore because of affinities with the current Russian President Vladimir Putin. A traditionalist, he was influenced by thinkers like Evola and Guenon, and he is also an admirer of Alain de Benoist. Dugin is a staunch opponent of the United States and Atlanticism, and a promulgator via his International Eurasian Movement of a large Euro-Asian alliance, intended to limit the scope of America's interference and the spread of a hegemonic cultural model, both political and economic. This idea of a grand alliance between the Slavic peoples and the Europeans,

is recurring and widely supported by many exponents of NSBM.

In *Lords of Chaos*, Moynihan and Söderlind had already caught some signs of an ultra-nationalist and populist drift within metal music in Russia, perfectly exemplified back then by Korrozia Metalla, the multi-dimensional project of Sergey "The Spider" Troitsky. The band made headlines for defying the diktats of the system since the early Eighties with concerts full of excesses, and massive use of shock themes and symbols that were repeatedly interrupted by the KGB. Musically, they relentlessly researched the extreme, and in a thirty year career they ranged from thrash to speed metal, not excluding industrial and grind elements. But the corrosive sound mixture perfected in nine albums is just one aspect that caused the enormous media attention that has affected the group. In the Nineties, the grandguignolesque style of Korrozia Metalla gradually gave way to less shock rock and a more radical setting, the lyrics shifted to topics related to nationalism and Nazi iconography earned a certain amount of space in their live performances (and also in the album titles, such as *Computer-Hitler* released in 1997). This transition is well manifested in one of their most famous songs, *Kill to Sunarefa*, in which they rail against the ethnic minorities that were pouring into the capital.

Their increasing popularity and outside the box statements brought the band to the attention of various factions of the extreme Right, determined to take advantage of the great media visibility of the charismatic Troitsky and the influence that he was able to

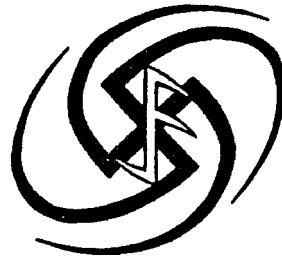


exert over an increasing number of fans. As a culmination of a rather bizarre project, the National Radical Party chose Troitsky as its candidate in the run for mayor of Moscow in 1993, a politically short-sighted decision whose echo reached overseas, and was even picked up by major American newspapers such as *The Wall Street Journal*. Troitsky's militant infatuation does not seem to have died down, and in 2012, his candidacy for mayor for the city of Khimki was confirmed and made public through a series of videos that appeared on YouTube. Korrozia Metalla were certainly a signal that something was happening, but the different cultural context from which they emerged, that is not exempt from a taste for provocation and a certain black humor, puts them on a different level than the fervent agitators of National Socialist black metal who, at the very beginning of the Nineties, were taking their first steps in the wake of the clamor raised by the Inner Circle.



To talk about radical black metal in the former Soviet Union means that we have to delve into the realm of Blazebirth Hall (henceforth BBH), the oldest and most famous NSBM enclave born under the shadow of the Urals. For years, they have been an obscure and self-sufficient reality, cut off from the most basic fundamentals of the recording industry. Its origin is shrouded by an aura of myth that always surrounds these organizations which are able, even in the age of accessible and comprehensive information, to hide behind a hazy veil and keep away from prying eyes. Born around Novomoskovsk, in the Oblast' of Tula<sup>2</sup> located south of the capital Moscow, this collective falls under some underground music projects that emerged around 1993/94, the years when an embryonic black metal subculture also began to take root in Russia, in the wake of the Scandinavian events. Branikald, Raven Dark, Forest, Rundagor - soon joined by Vargleide, Nitberg, Yggradssil and Wotansjolv - are bands that, with different methods, will form the backbone of this small circle, born mainly in suburban contexts in a historical period that finds Russia, the ruined fortress of Communism, dealing with the collapse of a political and social fabric that had stood for more than half a century. The changes are many, and if the big cities were struggling to adapt to the innovations, the rural areas lived in a state of perpetual poverty. In such a sensitive context, the echo of a brutal European subculture such as black metal was weak, the small amount of fans out there proved unresponsive and overall disinterested, outlining a general context of marked desolation.

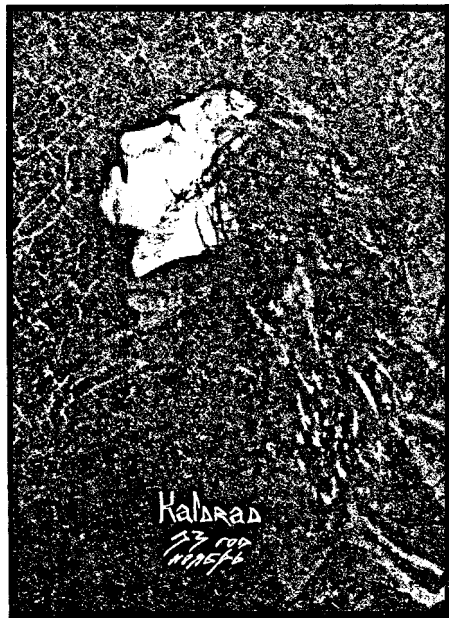
From this situation with no apparent way out came the self-imposed isolationism which, for several years, plunged the BBH into mystery - in fact, ideologies aside, it was the only organized nucleus dedicated to black metal that was active at that time in Russia.



*Blazebirth Hall's logo*



The tapes they released were cautiously circulated among selected individuals; the limited metal underground, inflated by genres such as death, grind or thrash, was completely rejected and kept at a distance in a mutual lack of interest that was affected only by the explosion of black metal on a large-scale, that occurred in the years between 1995 and



*An old promo picture of Kaldrad Branislav*

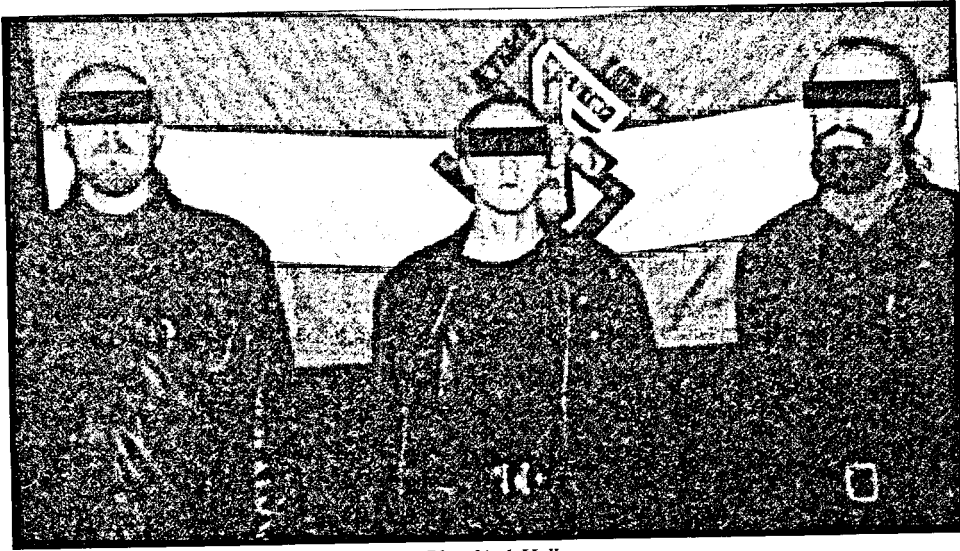
1997, when the impetuous deflagration of the black wave from Northern Europe made the phenomenon impossible to ignore and awoke the interest of new and young recruits. This musical aspect is only half the story; inspired by the Scandinavian precursors, the new phalanx of radical Russian black metal also reflected the extra-musical teachings and, in combination with the studio activities, it concentrated from the beginning on «*various crimes against Judeo-Christianity society and its morals*»<sup>3</sup>, in perfect continuity with the revolutionary anti-Christian upheavals triggered in that historical period.

The transition from total artistic exile to a first form of contact with the outside world took place in 1996, when Hungry AK-47 Productions reissued *Stormheit*, Branikald's first album (a one-man band led by Branislav Kaldrad), and also released the

demo *Stronghold of Ruin* by Rundagor. This was the first attempt to spread the music of the BBH through a typical, although underground, music scene. The newborn fellowship was short-lived however, as Kaldrad, unhappy with the management of his material, terminated the agreement and returned to the shadows, waiting to explore other options. The turning point which then led to a widespread circulation of BBH productions and gave rise to the cult was the partnership with Stellar Winter, owned by Gorruth - a key figure in the Russian black metal organization - which practically became the only official channel for the release of numerous BBH productions since the end of the Nineties<sup>4</sup>.

While these were some historical occurrences, if we leave the cold marketing issues aside and seek to establish the backbone of this forge of Soviet NSBM, we realize that everything revolves around three key characters: Kaldrad Branislav, Ulv Gegner Irminsson and Dagorath. Many musicians were in orbit around this polarizing core, which eventually gave a complete musical form to the ideas that were constantly flowing from the trio's torrential artistic talent.

Kaldrad Branislav can be considered the most important figure within the BBH, and, as we shall see, is the only one still active: leader of Branikald, founding member of Forest, Nitberg and Vargleide (and in one way or another participant in almost all the



Blazebirth Hall

other bands of the organization or contiguous to it), Kaldrad was also the one who led the BBH in terms of logistical and administrative support, as well as the one responsible for the music style of the bands in which he involves himself. A man of inexhaustible inspiration, Branikald's feverish musical output alone offers an idea of his perpetual state of compositional grace: thirteen releases, all between 1994, the year of the first demo, *Stormheit*, and 2001, with the *Triumph Des Willens*, which is the last work to be officially released. Branikald's style has remained faithful to the tried and tested motif, introducing only minor advancements, from time to time, that can hardly be captured with a superficial listen, but mark a gradual artistic/ideological path. The closest influences, to be expected from a project that took its first steps in 1993, are vividly captured at first glance: the cold and melancholy riffing comes from Darkthrone's *Transilvanian Hunger*, and the atmospheres are indebted to Burzum's *Hvis Lyset tar Oss*, which also inspires the long ambient digressions.

What puts Kaldrad above the wide plethora of mere clones is his ability to build effective sidereal atmospheres, exploiting a compositional pattern that is in itself simple and already widely legitimized. Long tracks with a steady rhythm section, create a structure on which the riffs are repeated and chase each other in a grueling hypnotic repetition: *A Stormride*, *Burning All the Bridges Behind Myself* or the endless *Upon the Waves of Inspiration*, bravely placed to open *Blikk Av Kald* (2006), are proof. As per tradition, the influence of wild nature, revisited with a pagan twist, and in opposition to gray modernity, actively contribute to shape the band's sound, while the graphics and lyrics do not yet reveal a full-blown ideological position, although it is present and clarified without beating around the bush:

## SLAVA!

*«As unharmonical as the blizzards are, winds and the storms, as the winter forests and fields are frosty and raw – so is our music of war, afire in each sound of it. This is the music of those who bear the power, it brings darkness, eternal winters and the devastation of the war between the races...»<sup>5</sup>.*

Kaldrad – who since 1997 has also been a member of Vandal, one of the oldest RAC bands related to the Russian Blood & Honour network – will give Branikald a decisive and unequivocal turn with the release of the aforementioned *Triumph Des Willens*, which in many ways marks a sharp break with the past. The typically metal aesthet-



*The cover of Branikald's CD  
Triumph Des Willens (2001)  
and a graphic detail from the booklet*

ics, made of black clothes, studs and long hair, have now been abandoned and replaced with a clear skinhead image, a transition that is confirmed by the presentation of the album: gone are the paintings inspired by mystical nature, with abstract features and dark tones (many of which are the work of Kaldrad's wife), replaced with bright tones and aesthetics that clearly reference National Socialism, starting with the subjects represented on the cover and ending with the adopted graphic style. Even the logo is revisited and presented with a new look that includes a Celtic cross and the Imperial Eagle. The booklet is a triumph of trenches, soldiers and Stuka under a firmament of galaxies: a communion of totalitarian aesthetics, Norse mythology and galactic landscapes, in search of that supernatural tone that is typical of Nazi mysticism. But while listening to it, the record itself reveals even more noteworthy stylistic variations: the songs are shorter and more concise, the riffs leave the cyclic repetition responsible for dilated atmospheres behind, and incorporate RAC influences that weave into melodies with clear black metal legacy. The introduction of clean and bombastic vocals, clumsy in technique

but of high impact and, to some extent, influenced by bands such as Isengard or Storm, gives a declamatory angle which explodes in songs like *Meine Ehre Heißt Treue*, *For the Aryan Lands* or even *Aryan Myth*, which summarizes, in a few lines, the impetuous Nazi imprint which had previously remained veiled:

*«Pure is the source which is within us  
Faith and loyalty, the blood and the race  
Under the banner of the sun, of Thor and svastika!»*

The album was released in 2001, but the band's new direction was suddenly halted by Kaldrad's incarceration on charges of assault, illegal possession of weapons and incitement to racial hatred; once he regained his freedom, he took a break from his main project to continue working on the other fronts that saw him involved.

In 1999, Kaldrad and Ulv Gegner Irminsson had already founded Nitberg, another black metal band devoted to exploring different territories compared to their respective bands of origin. With their epic and emphatic tone, held alternately by classic screaming and clean vocals, but more often by the disquieting pseudo-lyrical singing already experienced before (with mixed results), Nitberg's sound already showed signs of gradually abandoning Branikald' atmospheres in order to surrender to a sonic assault with warlike RAC shades, that was more in line with the uncompromising approach adopted by the BBH in its second phase. *Hammer Härte* (split album released in 2004 with Volkoten, a BBH band comprised of several musicians who collaborated with Nitberg and Forest) and the EP *Nitsanger* (2005) are clear evidence of both the new sound path and the much more radical vein underlying the ideology of the band: in this sense, a song like *Holocaust to the Jews and the Poisoned Ones* belongs to the most obvious NSBM tradition. In 2007 and 2010, two other albums were released (*Donnerwetter*, *Donnerwyrð* and *Nagelreid*, containing only one 60 minute long track), but this time under the direct supervision of Kaldrad alone. Ulv Gegner Irminsson's career was cut short by an act of violence that happened



*Nitberg*



SLAVA!

in the night between October 22 and 23, 2005, when the musician was stabbed to death during an altercation that degenerated into a brawl and was allegedly ignited by massive alcohol consumption. Unlike other well-publicized news events, the media coverage of this event was almost zero, and the information reaching the European music scene was fractional and incoherent. What seems certain is that, contrary to early rumors, according to which the murderer was a militant of the extreme Left, Gegner was killed by a friend in the throes of a fit while they were both in the latter's apartment.

As already mentioned, Ulv Gegner Irminsson was one of the key characters in BBH, and well before the experience with Nitberg, had already made himself known with his solo project Raven Dark, active since 1994. His fierce black metal, saturated with militant paganism and supported by bursts of clean vocals and acoustic guitar inserts, has always pursued the dictates of the genre with conviction and without launching into impromptu and daring experiments: the style is not very different from that of his comrades, and once again, a direct affiliation with Northern Europe is obvious.

The connection with NSBM would not be so obvious for Raven Dark, were it not for the explicit proclamations: the lyrics and graphics are in line with black metal warlike imagery, and there are no immediate references to thorny ideological issues. But certain stances are spelled out in words, almost like a badge of honor to be pinned conspicuously on the uniform:

*«Inspired by the dark sides of nature this musical project rooted deep into Wotanism, NS and anti-Judeo Christianity»<sup>7</sup>.*

In Gegner's (the German word for "adversary") compositions, an inclination towards refined atmospheres imbued with mysticism is clearly perceptible, and is probably the most distinctive feature of his work. Paganism, obviously reinterpreted from a racist perspective, is one of the fundamental themes of the Russian musician's work, as well as his preferred field of study; besides his activity as a musician, many of his esoteric/pagan writings have been published in various magazines of the local extreme Right. Gegner makes no secret of his ideas, which are far more radical than the aesthetics of his Raven Dark let on: among them, the hatred towards the mass culture imported from the U.S. and the great Jewish conspiracy that keeps all Western nations in check; all this is echoed by the total glorification of the Third Reich and its ruling class, and the constant search for a purity of blood - seen as an essential factor to redefine a big "white nation", in contrast to the migratory flows and liberal policies that favor the degeneration of the original gene pool of the populations<sup>8</sup>.

The ideology that permeates the work of these musicians is certainly far more resolute (and in some ways more documented, although based on questionable historical canons) than that expressed by the Norwegian forefathers who, with the exception of Vikernes, did nothing but flaunt the ghost of watered-down Nazi-Fascism that certainly could not compete with the barbaric resolution of the Russian groups.

*Verdandi*, *Berustet av Krigsdronnet* and *Autumn Roar* (recorded in 1994 but released posthumously in 2006) are Raven Dark's three main albums, followed by *Katarsis*, a tape after which the project was put on ice, only to undergo an «*alchemic evolution*», according to its creator, which led to the birth of Wotansjolv (translated as "Wotan's silver"). Under this new moniker he recorded an album that was never released, titled *The Dreams of Baldr*. Some of its songs are included in Raven Dark's last release, a compilation titled *In the Last Ray/Ruler's Age*.

Before Nitberg, Kaldrad and Gegner had already formed an artistic partnership which answers to the name Forest, and whose genesis saw the participation of the third element of the BBH triad, Dagorath:

*«The concept of Forest was born after Kaldrad's and Dagorath's journey into the old woods where the long forgotten sacrificial places/forest temples and burial mounds of ancient Slavs were situated. The unique atmosphere of these haunted woods, the ghosts of the past channeled the inspiration into the hearts and mind of Forest creators»<sup>9</sup>.*

Practically speaking, these mystic inspirations translate into obsessive black metal, with monotonous and hypnotic rhythms, not much different from what was done by Kaldrad with Branikald. This musical commonality is not surprising, considering that most of the compositions are his own - although, in terms of feeling, Forest's peculiar style lies in greater use of melancholic and grandiloquent atmospheres. In the first eponymous album, it is definitely possible to find similarities ranging from the inevitable Darkthrone to the less known Ildjarn, but in the following albums there is a more structured melodic vein. The continuous search for enveloping atmospheres guides the riffs towards ambient territories and includes evocative excerpts of clean vocals with dominant folk impressions, a stylistic method that is an integral part of the DNA of BBH bands. The following albums *Like a Blaze Above the Ashes*, *As a Song in the Garden of Grief* and *Foredooming the Hope for Eternity* lead to the completion of a merger between the brutal assaults of Scandinavian imprint, the Burzum-esque ambient influences and certain epic-pagan hues that seem mediated by the Polish black metal school.

In particular, *Foredooming the Hope for Eternity* represents not only the highest achievement in the band's artistic path, but also the full manifestation of the essence of the BBH: the line-up also included Ulv Gegner Irminsson, and this is the only album in which all three main characters of the movement appear side by side. After this album, Dagorath officially departed:

*«Dagorath of Rundagor (RIP) left everything he was involved in the past: all radical ideological activities, BM scene and so on. Later, after the terror-campaign waged on Dagorath by two remained Forest members and their allies, he was forced to escape from town where he lived and now his whereabouts are unknown, as well as no one knows if he is still alive or not at all»<sup>10</sup>.*

Some rumors spread on the Internet - but never officially confirmed - implied that Dagorath was dead, "eliminated" by his own former comrades in a punitive ritual, certainly not a novelty in this environment. However, he would not be the first black metal musician to cover his tracks, giving rise to uncontrolled legends about him, a practice as inevitable as it is unverifiable and, in a way, part of a typical tradition of the genre.

Forest's last work can be considered the twin of Branikald's *Triumph Des Willens: In the Flame of Glory* (2005), almost entirely conceived by Kaldrad's mind, it is a reflection of the same process of radicalization which the other project had already faced, with the use of an apocalyptic aesthetic tinged with political references that leave no doubt. Similarly, the music became more direct, with the increasing influence of certain connotations deriving from the skinhead environments with which the members of the BBH formed a concrete and functional bond.

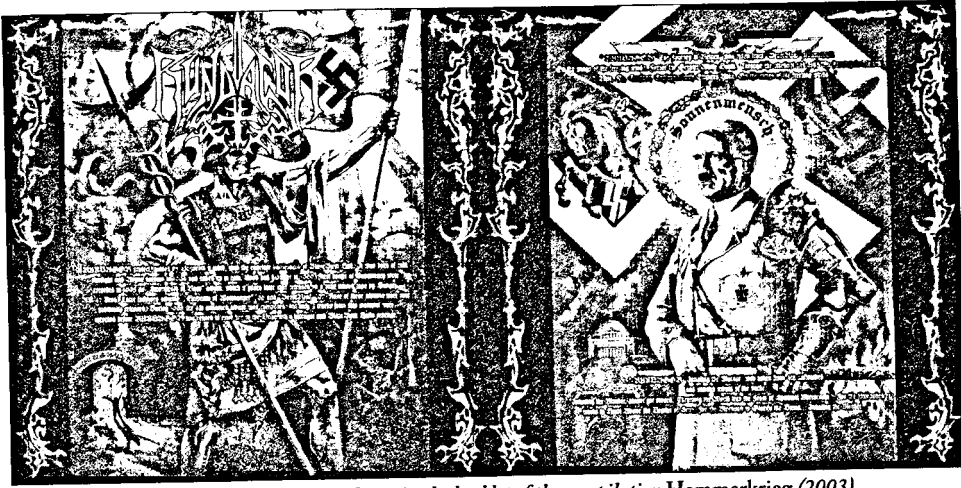


After this record, the name Forest was abandoned and Vargleide rose from its ashes, but their short life ended with Gegner's death. The band left only two releases to posterity: *To the Flame of the New Day* and *When Only Ashes and Scorched Earth Are Left Behind...*, well crafted but minor, when compared to Forest's artistic legacy.

Taking a step back, we can not forget that, before his dismissal, Dagorath was not only a founding member of Forest, but also the sole creator of a mysterious creature named Rundagor. His legacy in terms of records is actually small and impalpable, considering that none of the albums he recorded were ever distributed. They include *Elements of Warmonger* (1996), *BeastReal* (1997) and a further work planned for 1998, for which only three songs were recorded, before Dagorath's departure consigned them all to oblivion<sup>11</sup>.

The only official release of the one-man band remains *Stronghold of Ruin*, a demo dated 1995, and, as already mentioned, one of the first tapes unleashed by BBH's self-sufficient management that reached a larger audience through the distribution channels of Hungry AK -47 Productions. The album is a mix of apocalyptic sounds and black metal devastation, an explosive mixture made unstable by incredibly chaotic if not non-existent





*The pages dedicated to Rundagor in the booklet of the compilation Hammerkrieg (2003)*

production values, never-before-heard on other albums of the BBH milieu: the guitars reach a level of distortion which often result in a cacophony, creating an alienating atmosphere with noise connotations that pervades all of the tracks. As order coming out of chaos, epic melodies occasionally emerge on which the vocals, mostly excruciating cries filtered to the point of sounding barely human, only occasionally manage to triumph over the confusion of primal sounds that spills out from the speakers. The result is symptomatic of one of the most unique and historically inexplicable traits of black metal: the attainment of a state of excellence, of a unique and engaging atmosphere through the reckless overlaying of formally wrong musical practices. As a thematic peculiarity, the record also contains one of the few tracks (if not the only one) conceived by BBH bands, with a title that explicitly references Satan: the opening is entrusted to a piece called *Unmalicious Satan Son*.

With Forest splitting up, Gegner's death which marked the end of Raven Dark, Dagorath's departure resulting in the burial of Rundagor, and Branikald's stalling because of Kaldrad being busy on other fronts, we can say that it was the end of a phase for the BBH, the one closest to traditional black metal, both in terms of contents and sounds/aesthetics. In 2003, to celebrate this rite of passage, a compilation titled *Hammerkrieg* was released, which is a cult item for many collectors today and probably the best possible means to access the remote lands of Russian NSBM. The album, with its dark gray cover, includes a rich booklet in which each band is granted two pages with a short biography and song details, thus covering the basic steps of the artistic development of each project related to the dark Soviet enclave. All the most important names of the BBH are included here, in some cases, with previously unreleased tracks, and on the last page of the booklet a long and visionary proclamation paints the team as *«The pure spiritual form where the sacred flame of life burns bright among the thundering*





roar of the fate. Us a herald to the will of the gods, as a reflection of the celestial Asgard all across the earthly landscapes...»<sup>12</sup>, with clear references to the Nordic myth which, even for the varied reality of Russian National Socialist black metal, represents the main mythological source to draw from. And at the end there is a reference to the Pagan Front, which Stellar Winter (one of the leading labels) was already part of, that sounds like a call to arms with the tones of military recruitment:

*«All the existing Blazebirth Hall bands are members of the Pagan Front, the hammer of National Socialist black metal Underground. Join us, we are the future!»<sup>13</sup>.*



To this day we can say that the golden age of the BBH (but generally speaking, of the entire NSBM scene of the early days, which experienced the glories of the Nineties) has waned. With various bands going into hiding and stalled projects, only Nitberg is taking charge of the heavy and controversial legacy built over the years on the basis of ideological radicalism and black metal assault.

Nevertheless, something moved around the central core of the BBH, which remained virtually unchanged over the years. A series of more or less known projects, but ideologically contiguous to the same cultural background, sprang up thanks to some long-time collaborators of the bands mentioned so far, and Kaldrad and Gegner often took a step back to lend their talents to the creation of other people's artistic designs. The genres covered by these forays outside the strict sound guidelines of the BBH are extremely varied, from RAC to black and folk metal, but they always keep in mind an overview that necessarily needs to be compatible with the ideology behind the movement.

Among the entities closest to the spirit of the BBH are Woods of Fallen, the enigmatic project of Gorruth - later assisted by the omnipresent Kaldrad - of which little is known both in terms of line-up and released material, although Gorruth himself has confirmed during several interviews that some demos were unofficially distributed. The two songs that appeared on as many compilations are easily traceable: a Burzum cover



*Woods of Fallen's logo*

(*Beholding the Daughters of the Firmanent*) appeared on the celebratory anthology *Visions - A Tribute to Burzum* and an original song that appeared on the second volume of *The Night and the Fog*.

In spite of what may seem like a cached activity, Gorruth happens to be one of the crucial linchpins around which the Russian underground revolves, especially where the boundaries between traditional black metal and NSBM become blurred. In addition to managing the activities of Stellar Winter (which apart from the BBH material also released Rodosvet, Fanisk and Veil from the USA and the aforementioned Kroda from Ukraine, thus showing an international outlook), he plays the role of true ideologue of the movement, a detail that

is perfectly captured in the interviews he gives where he never fails to articulate his replies, by touching upon any aspect that may be related to black metal, be it musical, political, social or religious. This propensity for the written word led him to play the role of a sort of "supervisor" for various relevant music projects, in which he is often credited as curator of the lyrics. This is the case of Walknut, authors of *Graveforests and Their Shadows* (2007), a superb example of raw black metal with strong atmospheres and dramatic resonances that unfold in long and hypnotic performances with echoes of the new Burzum - who is a real tutelary deity in the Eastern territories, both in terms of ideology and music. In this case, it is difficult to speak openly of NSBM: as with many other bands in this arcane Russian area, there is



*Group picture with members of Moloth and Rodosvet*

nothing explicit except the recourse to the usual symbolic background of pagan imprint (the Valknut is an ancient symbol associated with Odin) that goes back to nature and the "Nordic blood". StringsSkald, who is responsible for the musical aspect of this

project, boasts collaborations with Forest, Nitberg and Volkoten. So, if Walknut is not an admittedly NSBM project, it still moves in a neighboring territory, a sign that there is a certain contiguity of ideas at the basis of this tight spirit of collaboration.



*The cover of Velimor's Our World (2011)*

Another band born in the shadow of the BBH is Velimor, and they are linked to this milieu thanks to Ulv Gegner Irminsson, who was among the founders and a member until his death. The band, led by the imposing Mstivoy, have produced two works so far: of these, *Legacy* (2005) still shows clear signs of black metal heritage and reflects Gegner's imprint, though with more classically-influenced heavy metal - the opener *Wolfish to the Wolf, Sheepish to the Sheep* contains a riff that would not look out of place on a power metal record - and a sustained rhythm, far from the exhausting atmospheres of Raven Dark or Forest.

The second full-length, *Our World* (2011), moves away from the atmospheric black metal sound of the early days to chase more muscular sounds, closer to a rocky pagan metal, as heard in songs like *In Memory of Heroes* or *The New Dawn*. The album also sports a pop detail on the cover: on a bucolic background, in transparency, there is the silhouette of a woman caressing a child; it is a frame taken from the movie *300* by Zack Snyder and based on the eponymous graphic novel by Frank Miller, the fictionalized version of the historic Battle of Thermopylae in which a small contingent of soldiers from the Greek city-states - in particular the film focuses on the fate of the 300 Spartans led by Leonidas - opposed themselves to the death to the numerically superior Persian troops led by Xerxes. The brave fight against the enemy armies that pushed from the East, when transferred to the present day, can easily be seen as a metaphor for a struggle against the wave of immigration coming from the lands of the Middle East, especially against those of Muslim customs. Following this same line of thought, the cover version of *Serbia Dumna* by the Ukrainian-Polish Warhead, included on the EP *For the Glory of Our Kin*, finds its ideal placement. It is a song dedicated to Serbia at war against the «Muslim Storm» which «Is approaching to destroy the great nation of our Slavonic brothers»<sup>14</sup>. And speaking of covers, the band also decided to strengthen an already strong bond - at least in the Eastern territories - with the subversive extreme Right scene, participating with the song *Rudolf Hess* in a tribute compilation titled *The Last Drakkar - In memory of Mariusz* (2009), dedicated to the late

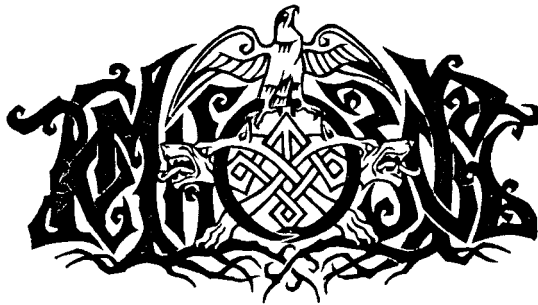


*Mstivoy on stage with his band Velimor during the WotanJugend festival in December 2012*

Mariusz Szczerski of the Polish skinhead band Honor, well-known in the black metal milieu for a split album with Graveland.

But the band that has made a name for themselves more than any other, both for their unarguable artistic quality and the amazing feedback they received, thanks to a more accessible sound, are Temnozor (which literally translates to “the spirit of dawn”), a folk metal ensemble that is particularly appreciated, despite an uncomfortable affiliation to the Pagan Front.

Their genesis is not simple: formed in 1996 by Wuulko and Tuur, who were already active in the first incarnation of the more popular Rakoth, they recorded a first and immature demo titled *Be Oden Narod Slavensk*, followed shortly after by the actual debut, *Sorcery Is Strengthening the Black Glory of Rus'* (1999), which immediately showed signs of a progression that was well received both by the black metal scene and the white power community: clean vocals accompanied by a more classic screaming, acoustic passages, traditional instruments and an extensive use of the flute perfectly framed the band's design in the still novel folk metal genre. The band works



*Temnozor's logo*

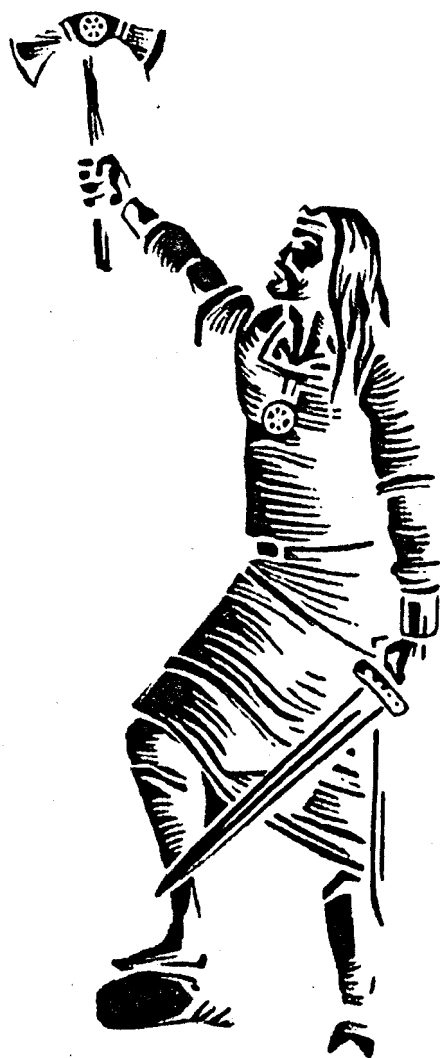
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closely with Stellar Winter owned by Gorruth, who actually plays an auxiliary role regarding Temnozor's activities, often answering interviews, acting as their manager, and also appearing as the author of the lyrics. At this stage, despite a line-up that would face heavy changes, the band's ideological substratum was already strongly defined and the enemy identified: modern civilization based on materialism and corrupted by the Judeo-Christian plague. These represent tumultuous years, however, in which the ensemble struggled to find a stable dimension and was forced to deal with constant accusations regarding the propaganda of ideas inciting racial and religious hate<sup>15</sup>.

And Temnozor have certainly never tried to hide their stance, which has been constantly expressed without fear. The booklet of *Sorcery of Fragments* (2003), a collection that includes the debut demo and the following, more experimental, EP titled *Fragments...*, clearly states the following:

*«Temnozor music is for our racial comrades worldwide only. Every sub-man buying or distributing it contribute to their future annihilation»<sup>16</sup>.*

But the breakthrough record is definitely *Horizons...* (2003), an album that essentially represents a new beginning for the band, as well as their first step towards a career with unexpectedly mainstream implications, regardless of their harsh message. It must be said though, that the band never indulged in the abuse of aesthetic clichés and tacky shock tactics with the sole purpose of rousing attention, and the lyrics revolve mainly around issues that range from the celebration of their Russian roots to invoking the ancestral heritage of a centuries-old tradition: from the point of view of an external observer, Temnozor's presentation is similar to that of any other uninvolved folk/pagan metal band, and there are no cryptic keys to find hidden meanings. However, the band attributes this philosophical background to a pagan ideal that is inextricably linked to National Socialism, and this combination is proven at every available opportunity:



*«We're inspired by the landscapes of the Northern hemisphere. We're inspired by racial and religious hate, by love and Aryan kinsmanship spirit. We're inspired by the tragedies and the joy. We're inspired by the sun and the moon. By the clouds and the stars in the sky. We're inspired by the street violence and by the silence of the wintry blackwoods. We're inspired by our NS/Pagan gatherings and by the loneliness too [...] Behold the churches burning like candles when the smoke from their ashes flies slowly into the evening skies. That's our grimness. The grimness of our Aryan European nature, the grimness of our spirituality»<sup>17</sup>.*

The line-up on this album is almost entirely different from that of the debut (and Gorruth will have nothing kind to say about the ex members)<sup>18</sup>, replaced by new recruits that include such names as Kaldrad of Branikald, who deals with the screaming, and StringsSkald of Walknut, whose work on guitars is clearly audible. Musically, the album offers a huge leap forward, boasting evocative and crepuscular atmospheres, highlighted by refined melodies and acoustic passages dominated by Petr's declamations, often dubbed by Kaldrad's visceral vocal lines.

The enthusiastic reactions were amplified in their homeland by a curious anecdote about the distribution of the album: the record was released by the biggest rock music label in Russia, CD-Maximum, which normally deals with high profile names like Ozzy Osbourne, Malmsteen or Mayhem. Two days later, under pressure of various anti-Fascist organizations that assaulted the label with emails pointing out Temnozor as a Nazi band, the album was removed from their distribution. Subsequently, once it was established that, beyond the band's obvious ideas, the lyrics did not contain anything illegal, *Horizons...* was regularly put back on the market. Meanwhile, most of the distributed copies were already sold, a sign of a definite interest around the band, who remember this episode as a first attempt to infiltrate mainstream metal with messages of racial awareness<sup>19</sup>. The acceptance and appreciation of the band keeps growing within the extreme Right scene, and the members themselves are a concrete evidence of this increasing convergence between once opposing factions:

*«A half of Temnozor's current line-up are skinheads, the other half are NS metal folks. So what do you think our attitude to this subject could be? Racially conscious Aryan folks must stand as one to survive, when we bleed and die on the streets of our own cities, who is so dumb to divide the comrades upon the style of music they listen to?»<sup>20</sup>.*

Incredibly enough, with the same line-up, Temnozor released another album in 2005, titled *Folkstorm of the Azure Nights*, reinforcing the role of primary importance they now assumed in the underground. This album also confirms the Russian NSBM scene's motivation to crawl out of its hole, leaving the low profile and the self-banishing elitism of the early days behind, to appear on the broader stage of international metal.



The cover of Folkstorm of the Azure Nights (2005)

However, Temnozor's obvious ascending curve, further confirmed by the next album titled *Haunted Dreamscapes* (2010) and supported by intense live activity, brought them face to face with the growing fringe of militant anti-Fascist antagonism, who were alarmed by the explosion (in terms of numbers and popularity) of bands devoted to this form of racist paganism based on the concepts of "blood and soil", which are of primary importance to National Socialism. Although one might argue whether or not Temnozor are a strictly NSBM band (which from a musical point of view might be a hasty conclusion, though their philo-

sophical directions are exactly those), the band has been repeatedly pointed out by the antagonist networks as one of the prominent exponents of this phenomenon, sparking predictable reactions that were far from denial:

*"The most of metalheads are fine with Temnozor, while the most of regular people don't know and don't care about us and the music we play. However there is a small but aggressive group of punks and soccer hooligans who call themselves "antifa". People who love Karl Marx, Mao Zedong and Red Brigades (they call it "fighting for freedom"), they love living in dirt (it is called "squatting"), are into destroying (others) cars (they call it "protest"), eat from the garbage cans (they call it "freegan way"), they also like to assault metal musicians when they are highly outnumbering and are known to run very fast when they are not (they call it "anti-Fascist action"). These nice gentlemen are threatening metal gig promoters, metal labels, metal bands and even simple fans when they think that this or that band is against Left-winged political views and against their morals (they call it "Fascism"). No one would really care, but the aforementioned jerks stop at nothing – they give false info to the newspapers and TV, they toss up the facts, they call police and when all of it doesn't work they threaten their opponents with physical violence. [...] Temnozor openly refuse to accept their rhetorics, thus "antifa" try to create "bad image" over our band»<sup>21</sup>.*



As we already said, one of the essential figures in defining the complicated and multidimensional Eastern European ideological underground, and the Russian one

in particular, is Temnozor's deus-ex-machina: Gorruth. If Kaldrad Branislav can be considered responsible for the musical direction taken by a vast number of projects born in the Russian enclave back in the Nineties (not least Temnozor themselves), Gorruth is the one who pulled the strings and set the stage for a wide-ranging organization, and in a way, he set himself up as a "grand old man", acting as a reference point for the bands that revolve around both his Stellar Winter and the Pagan Front.



Gorruth

We have already mentioned Woods of the Fallen, and although the path of his personal project was not memorable, the role of mentor and ideologist of the movement finds Gorruth much more at ease. Thanks to his elaborate thought, Satanism, paganism, National Socialism and Slavic pride (which certainly did not have much luck during the Nazi invasion) manage to co-exist in the Russian scene. According to him, Satanism is the core of black metal, which in his view coincides with so-called Luciferian paganism<sup>22</sup>, defined as a satanic cult born from the ashes of Aryan pre-Christian paganism that spread in the Middle Ages, acting as a vessel of some archaic traditions that roughly survived as superstitions and teachings forbidden by the Christian fervor. Over the centuries, this current would suffer influences of various kinds before exploding once again within the radical black metal of the early Nineties as a distorted echo coming from the Aryan subconscious, as opposed to the decadent values of a declining Christianity (and it is Varg Vikernes who is referred to as the initiator of this racial revival within the black metal subculture). According to Gorruth, many exponents of black metal, seduced or corrupted by modern society, have lost their path and headed toward simplistic nihilistic tendencies or pseudo-satanic philosophies that have nothing to do with the real essence of primordial worship that reawakened after centuries. Those who have heard the call of the blood have come to the ultimate consequence, which is to embrace the pure essence of racist pagan traditions.

**Stellar  
Winter**

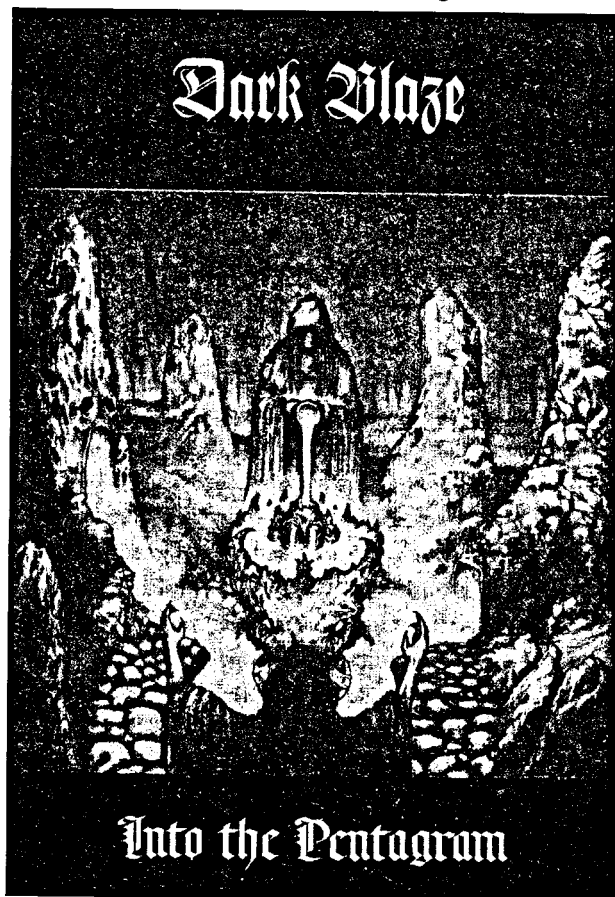
*«I can see certain points in the European Devil worship when it is combined with NS and pro-WP elements. So, it is the only "Satanism" I can, so to say, recognize... And although the Pagan Front doesn't support any kind of doctrines which derive (even if partly) from the alien*



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elements (or even include them) and, moreover, within the black metal subculture we fight the nihilism and anti-Aryan tendencies represented by the two first abovementioned categories of so called "Satanism", yet we're opened for the collaboration with intelligent, racially-conscious and really acting for the good of our movement pro-NS and white power follower of the European Luciferian paganism tradition»<sup>23</sup>.

This intensive categorizing, all sorted within what may seem like one big cauldron of occult beliefs, meets the ultimate goal of NSBM: destroy Judeo-Christianity. Therefore Satanism, in the meaning described above, forcibly merges with an anti-Semitic belief consecrated to the annihilation of Christianity and its creators. National Socialism (as a doctrine no longer linked to history) then becomes the obvious destination, as it evolves into the sum of all the philosophies that place themselves in opposition to Judeo-Christianity, both on a cultural and religious level.



*The Polish fanzine Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagram (n.1, 2001), which includes a long and exhaustive interview with Gorruth regarding Russian NSBM*

How do these theories coincide with a historical past that has not seen a fruitful alliance between the Slavic populations and the Third Reich? In this case, Gorruth recalls how there were many Russian volunteers who chose to fight under the banner of the swastika, and identifies this failed alliance as a mistake made by Hitler and Germany, without which things would have been different<sup>24</sup>. Gorruth sees all the European populations - including the Slavs - as part of one great Aryan race: the populations, on the strength of this heritage must understand how the quest for racial perfection (not only genetic but also spiritual, cultural and cosmic) is an essential requirement for facing a big and imminent race war that lies ahead in this globalized society. Since it is vital that all these concepts are instilled in

young people, the designated media to do this is black metal, the vehicle of a work of propaganda through which to reach the consciousness of the youth before they are corrupted by the system and become victims of the values supported by Judeo-Christianity. But NSBM (or skinhead music, if we consider the increasing need to expand their ranks) is only the first step, and for Gorruth it is just the beginning of a process that goes beyond mere musical aspects:

*«There must be new young people, coming from the white youth's subcultures, evolving and embracing far more serious and mature Weltanschauung than some "evil nazi black metal ideology" or "street skinhead nazi half-punk ideas". Thus we need to control these subcultures, weed out unneeded elements and lead them to the right direction»<sup>25</sup>.*

Although questionable, Gorruth's thesis gives a good idea of the kind of philosophy that animates the Russian NSBM scene. This wide-ranging vision, which certainly does not stop at recording albums and distributing them, almost resembles the broad expansionist prospects of George Burdi when he was still at the helm of the American label Resistance: in a way, Russia, with similar sounds and ideas, retraces the path already taken by the United States, with the difficult goal of transforming a musical subculture into a laboratory that molds young minds so they can face the world according to a specific value system. But it is unlikely that one tiny handful of black metal fans, although driven by an ideology, can actually pose a threat to the status quo (the Norwegian experiment failed, for example), leaving high-sounding proclamations colliding with the harsh law of numbers.

From this perspective, the words spoken by Temnozor in 2011 sound interesting, though cloaked in an air of resignation, as the boldness of the early days fades into an incontrovertible realization: you can not turn wood into iron.

*«In the past we wanted to inspire with our music the new generation of young people to be strong and proud for what they are, to learn their own roots and to live by the hammer. But you can't turn a something into a someone he (or it) isn't. Our ancestors had ships made of wood and men made of iron, now we have ships made of iron and the most of men made of wood...»<sup>26</sup>.*



Within a couple of hours drive North of Moscow, near the Volga River, lies the city of Tver'. Called Kalinin for over half a century (in honor of the historic Communist leader Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin), the metropolis returned to its original name at the beginning of the Nineties, due to the aftermath of the Glasnost wanted by Gorbachev. It is a place haunted by the past, ravaged during the Nazi occupation of 1941 and further scarred by the Soviet Union administration in the dark years of the Cold War. In early 2000, it



is precisely here that two young musicians and fervent nationalists, Alexey (vocals) and Mihail (bass), decided to give life to their musical creature by assembling a first stable line-up. The name chosen for

the band was violent and direct like the propaganda message that it wished to convey: Moloth (usually written M8l8th, replacing the two "o" with a blatant "88"). In the Russian language molot means hammer, and the "h" at the end of the moniker corresponds to Hitler's initial. For the founding duo, the alphanumeric equation is obvious: M8l8th means *The Hammer of Hitler*.

Alexey cultivates a particular passion/obsession with Burzum, whom he indicates as his primary source of inspiration. A man, a plan, but above all a symbol that is decisive to say the least, with regard to the origins and the musical and ideological improvement of Moloth.

*«Varg has done quite a lot for shaping the present-day world outlook in hundreds of people and his personality is extremely important for understanding everything related to paganism nowadays. [...] Burzum has certainly had an enormous impact on our creative work and coming-of-age. Yet one can say that in this case the importance of his personality – his opinions and actions – actually prevails over his music»<sup>27</sup>.*

Moloth are the overt children of what we might call the conscious generation of NSBM. From the very beginning, they did not surrender to certain satanic clichés, but headed towards a Nordic paganism whose only interpretation inevitably travels through the National Socialist doctrine.

*«Black metal was created by the white men as an embodiment of Nordic soul's archetypes. Initially, it showed in the satanic aesthetics but some years later it looks in the right direction. We are white people, we are successors of gods. We have our own history and our own traditions. We do not need neither Jehovah nor Satan. [...] For our opinion NSBM is any variety of black metal with the Nordic essence and the respect of Third Empire in itself»<sup>28</sup>.*

*«Paganism is that which was taken away from the white race one thousand years ago. [...] Today it is a war. The war up to last drop of blood, war against the decayed reality, that surrounds us, war for our white world. [...] A name for paganism today – National Socialism. Yes! I am the heathen!»<sup>29</sup>.*

In the spring of 2004 Moloth recorded the album that, within a few months, would propel them among the heavyweights of the East European NSBM scene, making them popular far beyond the barriers of what was once the Iron Curtain: *By the Wing of Black*. Seven bone crushing tracks (plus an introduction with the excerpt of a speech by Adolf Hitler) in which Alexey's voice makes the style of the band absolutely unique, with his uncontrollable screaming, wild and possessed like no one else's. In spite of the barbaric fury with which they are spat into the microphone, the lyrics are cryptic and refined, and they owe a lot to Vikernes' teachings. Among the various songs, we must mention *Scum*, where a raging poisonous waterfall is poured out on all the churches of Christian confession.

*«I hate priests, I hate churches, I hate all their fucking "culture", and most of all I hate their hidden owners – Jews. They have destroyed our great culture, having replaced it with the culture of Israel, distorted consciousness of the whole Russian people for one thousand years, having finished us up to a today's condition. [...] The church always participated in destroying of the white race»<sup>30</sup>.*

*By the Wing of Black* is a concentration of wicked hatred for the monotheistic enemy and ardent devotion to the motherland, specifically the territory and the population historically identified with the term Rus'.

*«We separate conception of Russian Federation and Rus'. The first is our state (ZOG) which is repressing native Russian people and filling our Fatherland with coloured immigrants and destroying our culture. Rus' is the primordial name of our country and it is the name of our proud people in the past. [...] As nationalists we struggle for Rus' but at the same time we are Europeans and we fight for the whole white Europe. And as racists we struggle for the existence of the whole white race. This is the main thing uniting all NS in the world»<sup>31</sup>.*



A year later, in March 2005, Moloth performed live in their city of Tver', marking their territory and formalizing the garments which will characterize their battle apparel for years to follow: a funereal and militaristic choreography where corpsepaint was replaced by camouflage, ski masks and black drapes, and where Alexey's long hair gave way to a skinhead cut. There is an official document issued in 2006 of that night on the verge of spring, which is the live album (with a special dedication to the Pagan Front) titled *Sturm*.

It will be five years before Moloth embark on a new full-length. Given to the manufacturers by Darker Than Black in 2009, *Unbreakable Faith*, suffered a fate marred by legal implications that inevitably marked its recording, as well as the actual release on the market. The dreams of glory and asceticism, ideally made explicit with the image on the album cover depicting Alexey kneeling in a clearing as he raises his arms to the starry night<sup>32</sup>, violently collided with the walls of the Russian prisons.

From its early stages, the police raid, followed by the swift incarceration of several militants, including Alexey, fed all sorts of urban legends. Stories were made more violent by further details regarding anti-Semitic vandalism and blatant serial killer actions, having some foreigners who settled in Tver' as victims. In 2010, Moloth's guitarist, Pavel, answered the questions regarding the news about Alexey being locked up in a psychiatric prison for the murder of four people and the theft of some corpses:



*Picture taken inside Alexey's prison cell during his detention*

*«It is true partly, but there was no corpse thefts of course. What's the delirium? Probably the reason for these rumors is an adjudgement of several NS fighters together with Alexey. And part of those guys were accused of disorders on Muslim and Jewish cemeteries. This is not the best subject of discussion because investigation is not finished yet»<sup>33</sup>.*

The little information that leaked from the Eastern front did nothing but worsen the nature of the frontman's actions, but at the same time, they made Moloth a project of pure NSBM terrorism. Blood-stained credentials are very coveted within the National Socialist community, and further elevated the band to cult status, making them a grim example because of an uncompromising militant attitude perpetrated with extreme consequences. At the end of 2011, Alexey was released on probation, and was finally offered the chance to unravel the many rumors that had risen in recent years.

*«In October 2006, I was detained for my participation in a nationalist group. Later on, I was charged with allegedly murdering several persons of foreign race. My comrades in arms*

- the total of over 10 people - were detained together with me. One of them was jailed for life, and the others got lesser prison terms - from 9 to 17 years... As to me, I spent 3 years in jail, while the investigation was going on; then, I was certified, found insane, and sent to a special mental hospital for criminals, where I spent 2 more years. After that, the medical board stated I was not injurious to the public, and I was set free. [...] I certainly was very lucky, as I was about to get sentenced for 20 years of jail. All of these hardships made me stronger, wiser, and gave me more experience. I can say we were getting older in jail. To me, this part of life is sort of unique and important - I have been through a deep spiritual purgation and growth. Besides, imprisonment has contributed to creative developments<sup>34</sup>.

In some sort of curious parallelism, Moloth took part in *Lost Freedom* during Alexey's years of imprisonment. This tribute compilation to support Varg Vikernes (who was also behind bars on charges of murder) featured a dozen RAC and NSBM bands from the former Soviet bloc paying homage to Burzum, covering some of the best-known songs. But what is ignored by many is that the little-known band that opens this album, Shepot Run, is none other than



Alexey and his girlfriend, both members of the folk project Shepot Run

Alexey's pagan folk project, which engages in the bare electric ballad *The Crying Orc*.

Despite the many and obvious obstacles that forcedly divided the band, Alexey continued to work on the song lyrics during the years of detention, while outside the prison, the other members of Moloth recruited new musicians in preparation for an imminent new release. We are referring to the split album with Nezhegol, a band devoted to pagan metal: a partnership symbolically titled *WotanJugend* (2011) that caused yet another rupture in Moloth's stormy career, redefining criteria and priorities for a style of music that sounds increasingly like a call to arms. Not surprisingly, the layout chosen for *WotanJugend* pays homage to Russian neo-Nazi groups with a series of shots that depict some of their members engaged in paramilitary exercises in clandestine locations.

*«Our split album design is very different from the classical concept of what a black metal album should look like; yet one should bear in mind that Moloth is quite different from what is*

SLAVA!

regarded as "classical" black metal, though we are exactly true black metal, the black metal of the white race. [...] Our design is a call to action; I guess nothing more should be said about it. The photos were taken by our comrades in arms. These pictures are an adaptation of the episodes of the modern revolutionary struggle, the "direct action"»<sup>35</sup>.

The new - albeit temporary - singer in Moloth clearly detaches himself from Alexey's stylistic approach. A conscious choice, as after all it would be virtually impossible to imitate the screaming heard on *By the Wing of Black*. Nevertheless, on *WotanJugend*, Moloth's lead vocalist offers a personal dimension to his interpretation of the lyrics written by Alexey<sup>36</sup>. At



the beginning, the CD is equally divided, with the first four songs by Moloth and as many tracks by Nezhegol, but the ninth and final song is *We Are Together, Brother!*, a cover version of a tune by the most famous Ukrainian RAC band ever, Sokyra Peruna. The track, which finds Moloth's singer and Nezhegol's alternating on vocals, is dedicated to all political prisoners - including Alexey himself, who was still being held in psychiatric detention.

But *WotanJugend* is not just the title of a record. It is also the name of a real circle of dissidents who share the same vision on Nordicism, an organization set up with the birth of Moloth (who call themselves its earliest standard bearers) that resumed its activities in full swing after the liberation of Alexey. If it is true that the band was readily affiliated with the sprawling Pagan Front during its first years of existence, Moloth claim independence today,

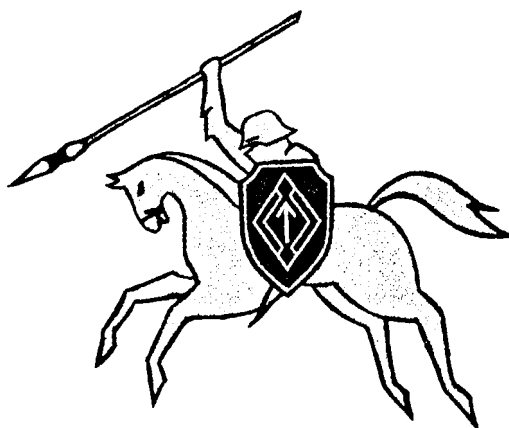


The festival organized by  
Russian militants in autumn 2012.  
Note the alcohol and smoking ban  
in pure straight edge style

both from transboundary networks and circles that exist within their national boundaries (such as the renowned Blazebirth Hall).

*«Moloth used to be a Pagan Front adherent; yet it's obvious that, unfortunately, it is no longer quite an organization anymore. We don't actually have any interaction with them, except sharing the same ideology.*

*WotanJugend is a group of people united by the Nordic world outlook and common goals. In fact, any Nordically oriented person may be our member»<sup>37</sup>.*



*WotanJugend's first logo*

In lyrics, and more generally in all of Alexey's writings, the cultural background acquired from the study of key characters in esoteric Nazism such as Miguel Serrano and Savitri Devi is clearly perceptible. It is also interesting to note that the singer does not limit himself to expressing ideas in carbon copy format, but he explicates his own personal vision. Leafing through the booklet of *Unbreakable Faith*, we read among the notes: *«...in the name of One-Eyed and his Earth's incarnation...»*, where the reference made to the earthly manifestation of the figure with one eye (the god Odin/Wotan of Norse mythology) is not as obvious as one might think.

*«I actually meant the entire white race, especially its quintessence - the man of Nordic blood. The whole kin of Jarl, the bearer of the Nordic archetype, is the earthly incarnation of Wotan; all of us are Wotan's youth, his children, WotanJugend»<sup>38</sup>.*



Entering the Russian territory, it seems that NSBM wanted to establish its strategic outposts along the winding course of the Volga. Coming down to the mouth of the river we arrive in the city of Volgograd, home of Armour Get Dawn Productions (henceforth AGD), a small label that has linked its name to ideologized black metal. However, unlike the more famous Stellar Winter, its productions have ranged among the genres with an uncommon eclecticism, touching some symphonic drifts with ambient/folk hues, although always aligned to a certain *Weltanschauung*.

As usual, activities were launched with a programmatic anthology, its intents and contents fully explained in the title: *Wolfengeist - NS Compilation* (2003). Many of



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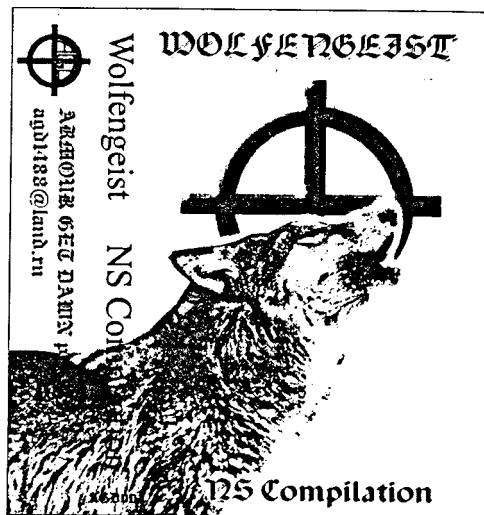
the bands in this compilation will form the core of what will be called Armour Get Dawn Circle, a small team of musicians active in the surroundings of Volgograd and founders of several projects that, as often happens, conceal incestuous collaborations. *Wolfengeist* provides a broad overview of the label's activities and stylistic directions, expressly placing NSBM projects (such as The Creed, Na Rasputje, Arijskij Sturm and Femegericht) side by side with pioneers of pagan metal like Rodovest, and the more elusive Temnojar, Khali-Juga, Sieg, Nord'n'Commander, Liholesje and Jarovit. These acts range from a symphonic black metal with ethereal connotations, often without vocals, to basic folk, ending with ambient landscapes. The result does not fail to arouse curiosity, although objectively poor, without frills and superstructures, as it vaguely recalls the sounds of some Austrian ensembles like Summoning or Pazuzu, mainly due to an all-encompassing use of the keyboards. The compilation also in-

**Another one step towards the Great Aryan Victory has been made - this compilation of Russian NS/Heathen Bands. The tracks presented on this tape are of different musical styles but they are united by the Might of the Great White Aryan Idea.**

**We've started our War - our Holy War under the banners of our Northern blue-eyed Ancient Gods, our Sacred Fight for the Supremacy of the White Race. Possessed by the WOLFENGEIST we come to dig into the throat of Z.O.G.**

**14/88!**

*Ideological manifesto printed in the compilation Wolfengeist*



cludes two big guns of the Russian NSBM scene, Temnozor and Branikald, who act as ambassadors of Blazebirth Hall and somehow certify and endorse the work of the newborn AGD.

The operations of the label based in Volgograd continued for about five years, providing a preferential channel for various bands with a music style that is hard to frame, but with a solid ideological stance that never emerges through brutal aesthetics or lyrical excesses. The AGD bands use a set of core themes, such as the celebration of the Hyperborean civilization, or the myth of the warrior and the magnificence of nature, that are seen as the temple of paganism, a well-structured mythical and mystical substrate that also seems to inspire their music. An example is Temnojar's debut tape *Kriegersweg*, a one-man band whose long keyboard suites punctuated by synthetic percussions seem musically similar to Pazuzu or early Mortiis, without the medieval/fantasy infatuation. The next release, *Hyperborean*

*Dylogy*, gathers songs off the first tape and *Echo of Hyperborea* (released as a split album with labelmates Sieg), and maintains the style but only stands out for the closing track, *Norwegian Wolf*, dedicated to Varg Vikernes. In the song, which is a long ambient digression inspired by *Bálferð Baldrs* (from *Dauði Baldrs*) and *Tomhet* (from *Hvis Lyset Tar Oss*), there are spoken samples of Vikernes himself, presumably taken from documentaries and TV interviews.

When speaking of Temnojar, one of the key personalities in this extreme underground scene, one can not fail to mention his past in a strictly black metal band called The Creed, whose brief career is summed up by their participation in the compilation *Wolfengeist* and a demo, *Beastslaughter* (2003), remembered more for the cover than for the primitive black metal contained therein. His contribution in Rodovest in 2002 should also be noted, formed out of the collaboration between Temnojar and Ognoslav. After some inconclusive ambient/folk experiments, the band embarked on a more fruitful path, merging NSBM with folk elements, clean vocals, keyboards and some death metal incursions, that gave shape to a curious hybrid of coarse but effective pagan metal captured in their only tape *Zdes' Russkaya Zemlya* (later reissued in CD format with the addition of two cover versions of Burzum and Absurd songs).

Setting aside the experience with Rodovest, Ognoslav, another musician around whom the destiny of various projects related to AGD revolves, decided to focus on the many activities that he is involved in: the one-man band Deplored, oriented towards an NS death metal assault, and the solo-project Sieg, which left a more substantial legacy consisting of a couple of demos, a split album with Na Rasputje and another with Temnojar - reaffirming the self-sufficient stance of this small enclave. Taking distance from the initial black metal interference, Sieg's sound is oriented towards symphonic ambience with martial percussion inserts and frequent gothic/folk passages. The result of this mass of disparate influences is the only full-length ever released, *Am Ende Der Zeiten* (2008), on the Polish label Eastside. Tireless craftsman and promulgator of NS ideology in all its forms, Ognoslav also leads an NS dark folk project of the same name, that has currently released only one demo, *Solncestoyanie* (1999), which surrenders to the most classic features of the genre.

In the chaos of all of these parallel activities, including instrumental and folk projects, as well as collaborations, the most relevant band that involves Ognoslav is



*Temnojar*



Na Rasputje. Formed as a duo in 1997, and always focused on a mixture of aggressive black metal with lyrics inspired by paganism and National Socialism, Na Rasputje have released a series of demos containing interesting ideas in terms of music, with many acoustic breaks or melodic openings that are held within simple riffing around which most of the songs revolve. *The Iceflame of Hyperborea*, *Hammer of Holocaust*, and *Stalingrad*, perfectly sum up the orientation of the band, and not only from a stylistic point of view. Between 2009 and 2010, they released two full-lengths that are absolutely true to their musical roots: *Seven Winds Above the Funeral Pile* (a tape issued in the proverbial 88 copies), followed by *Upon the Abyss*.

Leaving the circle of believers who form the nucleus of Armour Get Dawn Circle, there are various projects that debuted via the now defunct label from Volgograd. Among these, Jarovit (named after the god of war in Slavic mythology) is worth mentioning, as they were on the compilation *Wolfengeist*, and have a couple of excellent releases - *Vojna Svjatchenaja* and *Zov Simargla* - which reflect some of the characteristics of Temnojar and Sieg, with heavy keyboards used to create scenarios of uncontaminated nature that evoke the pagan spirit of the Slavic pantheon, while not neglecting some purely black metal accelerations that are sharpened by distant and heavily-effected vocals.

Another name that inextricably links its path to AGD is Harza, who have since split-up, but released two good albums inspired by events of the Second World War. While their black metal is quite typical, save for some violin inserts that give a more airy feel to the album, the ideological background is not as straightforward. Although NS themes are evident from the start, the band has later reassessed its position stating

their mere interest in celebrating the exploits of those people who have fought heroically in battle, not so much to follow the will of their leaders, but rather to defend their land and their families. As a matter of fact, their album *War* contains songs like *Panzer Führer* or *Leibstandarte*, with lyrics written from the perspective of the Axis forces, while in *Russian Warrior* the perspective seems to be reversed («*Wermacht warrior will know the power of our arms / Chechen bastards have no place to hide*»<sup>39</sup>).

Similarly, it is impossible not to mention Nezhgol (propelled to fame thanks to the aforementioned split album with Moloth) who released two albums on AGD, both under the banner of rough pagan metal but also filled with melodies, folk inserts and solar atmospheres. Hailing from Kaliningrad, a small Russian exclave geographically located between the territories of Poland and Lithuania, the band Holdaar are definitely more raw and brutal. They have released five albums which, while not essential, have not prevented the band from earning cult status. The sound mix is quite varied and it ventures along every path that can be traced to black metal, with epic songs accompanied by authentic extreme metal lashes detached from traditional legacies: the recent *Deti Sumerek Bogov* (2011) is steered towards a decidedly modern and well-produced NSBM, light years away from the typical necro-sound and rather oriented towards a RAC, thrash and death metal cross-hybridization. The band's creed has remained stable over time and it is not called into question: if statements of appreciation towards Adolf Hitler already issued to the press were not enough, comparing him to a messenger of the gods<sup>40</sup>, then songs like *Sieg Heil* and *Schutzstaffel* should remove any doubts.

This list could be much longer because, even outside of the élite circles such as Blazebirth Hall or Armour Get Dawn, there is a proliferation of small indigenous bands that promote the NSBM philosophy. Among those who have crossed the threshold of the debut, Sons of the North are worth mentioning. Hailing from the region of Tula, south of Moscow, they have authored three fairly decent albums, whose credibility is, however, heavily undermined by artworks that defy a common sense of good taste (and ridicule). Moving towards the Russian hinterland, we come across even more isolated bands which seem to create increasingly radical music the farther they are from the European continent. For example Nabat,



The cover of *Probuzhdenie Evropy* (2011) by Groma Glas

Karakondjo, Aufschwung (who recorded an EP titled *Mein Kampf*, just to clear all doubts) or Groma Glas, who are located just North of the Mongolian border, in the city of Irkutsk.

The eastward expansion of Nazi ideology, and especially of its pagan-racist substrate, does not seem to know setbacks and reaches the most remote lands of the vast ex-Soviet territory. This is the case with Volkolak, who come from the Oblast' of Amur, a territory of the Asian inland stuck between the Chinese border and the mouth of the Pacific Ocean.



Volkolak

The quartet, who have been active since the late Nineties, engages in pugnacious and epic folk, devoid of any stylistic refinements but fitting for the atmospheres that emerge from both the still unripe *The Feat of the Grey King* (2002) and its most accomplished successor, *Hail to the God of the Sun* (2004). These sounds find their perfect space-time placement during

live performance, not on the shabby stages of some third-rate venue, but rather during themed gatherings - in which the band is actively involved - where the lifestyle of the ancient pre-Christian people is recreated and detailed reconstructions of historical battles are arranged (the video included as a media track on the CD *Hail to the God of the Sun* offers an example). Their third work, *Dark Shine of Scales* (2005), takes a very different direction. The album is marked by crude pagan metal and the lyrics are in English for the first time, making the band's cultural background more accessible. Unsurprisingly, it is devoted to pagan worship in contempt of modern industrial society and, of course, Christianity. The experience gained with this album was then transmigrated into the side-project Volh, whose debut *Solemn March into the Ragnarok* (2006) is a blend of impetuous black metal free to express itself in all its elemental violence, thus allowing Volkolak to return to the roots. In *Disappear...* (2012) the songs are once again markedly folk and they do not deviate too much from the already established trademark of the band, who also manage to reinterpret a classic of their compatriots Temnozor, in their own style.

All of Volkolak's works, except the last released by the French label Crush the Desert Records, were released on Othal Productions, yet another label of clear political

orientation. This label has released albums by PD SS Totenkopf, Belarus' Apraxia, and the Russian sonic terrorists Wewelsburg, a band loyal to a series of aesthetic/musical excesses of a borderline nature. Formed in 2002 in Tomsk, a city in south-western Siberia, their first actual release was titled *The Anti-Architect*, barely forty minutes of sonic assault spread over eleven songs of resolute dedication to NS ideology. Far removed from esotericism and mysticism as well as the pagan spiritual component, Wewelsburg draw liberally from Germanic war imagery, starting with a military-like album cover and the crude words of the song *Totenkopf*.

*«We shall become Jewish nightmare  
In the name of order SS»*

Wewelsburg's style is erratic and uneven, ranging from industrial elements to typical thrash passages without hesitation, resulting in barbaric black metal, without neglecting some bombastic keyboard passages that creep here and there into the songs. They create a maelstrom of sound that disorients, and that the band itself, for lack of a better definition, has labelled "NS Hate Metal"<sup>41</sup>. Their following recordings confirmed their proximity to the skinhead scene, as demonstrated by the split release with the American band Operation Racewar, symbolically titled *No More Cold War!*. The idea came from Wewelsburg's leader, who claimed in an interview that he was inspired by the infamous Honor/Graveland split album, asserting that it was necessary to expand the collaboration between two different scenes that have a common enemy<sup>42</sup>.

In the same year, *Vier Jahre des Kampfes*, a retrospective album which gathers several songs scattered among various demos and split albums, saw the light: songs with titles that are impossible to

misunderstand, such as *Teach Children Nazism*, *Volga Boat Song*, *Royal Courthouse of Wewelsburg*, give a glimpse of an excessive style, that is much more in line with that of the RAC bands than with black metal. Still in terms of excesses, the artwork of *Last Intolerance* (2007) succeeds with the intent of combining trite clichés: in the background we see a black flag with a white Celtic cross, in the foreground two arms holding a gun, and on a forearm the word "Wewelsburg" carved in the flesh; all surrounded by fake flames. Leaving the disarming aesthetics aside, the CD lines up some successful material





*The anti-Semitic collage made for the song Gas Chamber Rock'n'roll, from the insert of Ultima Intolerance (2007)*

between RAC sounds, thrash and black metal, which form the backbone of violently propagandist songs like *Gas Chamber Rock'n'Roll*, with its unusual and disturbing party atmosphere, and *Gott Mit Uns*.

The Russian descent does not seem to be a problem for the band, who pragmatically claims to be uninterested in academic issues regarding the migration of ancestral peoples between the plains of Asia and Europe, being much more focused on the current situation:

*«I don't care who was the first forefounder, German or Slavs [...]. I'm not living with the past stereotypes, and looking forward. Today the white race is dying and it's really silly to quarrell between brother nations, just because we speak different languages or someone came before another. We have a real enemy, and all of white European nations must forget past mistakes and misunderstandings, so we can unite at the face of real enemy»<sup>43</sup>.*

Volkolak and Wewelsburg, as well as a few other bands scattered across the vast Siberian territory, certainly are a minority - not only geographically - in the Russian scene which has generated projects of a very different caliber in terms of music, but nevertheless, they are a testimony to how certain ideas have taken root everywhere, giving origin to a global network of bands and labels that can interface and collaborate with each other.



At the end of this tortuous journey to the four corners of the vast Russian territory, and given the tumultuous progress of the NSBM scene in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, it is clear that the Eastern Front is the main reservoir of bands related to the black metal and National Socialist ideal. In spite of a scene that seems to have lost some big names during the years, especially in Western Europe, the growing Eastern ensemble appears to be fierce and not at all weakened. The most diverse theories and the most varied stances coexist within it, but not without obvious contradictions, being the result of an often personal reinterpretation of contemporary history and the Second World War. Therefore, Norse mythology becomes an obvious element in the Russian territories, as an



aesthetic/ideological reference to paganism, and because of a devotion to a white Europe that never faded and that the ideologized bands have always looked toward, redrawing historical legacies, migrations of peoples of the pre-Christian period and the common ancestral roots of the Rus' people, in order to mark their common lineage.

Similarly, the great battle which opposes the Aryan populations and Judeo-Christianity (in the form of culture, religion, but also of an intruding force capable of maneuvering countries, the so-called ZOG) is compared to the events of World War II, although here, Hitler is not blindly deified. The mistakes for which he is considered responsible, such as having ignored the Slavic peoples as part of the Aryan race, place him on a more pragmatic and less divine political level, as is the case elsewhere. On the Eastern Front, National Socialism is perceived as a set of doctrines that promote the cult of strength, the preservation of traditions, the return to paganism on the basis of race and the destruction of the Semitic religions. In this context, National Socialism is reclaimed as the founding philosophy of NSBM and is no longer seen as a political movement closely tied to Germany, but rather as a broader system of values and ideas that have acquired a universal value with the end of the war. Paradoxically, this has happened in those nations that sanctioned the end of National Socialism.

## Notes:

1 - F. M. Dostoevskij, *Demons*.

2 - The Oblast' is a kind of administrative partition that is common in some Slavic states and the former Soviet Republics.

3 - Gorruth, from *Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagram* n.1, 2001.

4 - For a short time the BBH made a distribution agreement with the Greek label ISO666 Releases, particularly for reissue of Forest's first four albums. As reported by Kaldrad, the problems began when the label refused to print the official artwork, consisting of 16-page booklets in color, claiming economic reasons. The albums by Forest were then released and marketed with the graphics arbitrarily chosen by ISO666. Later on, problems concerning the payment of royalties and the actual number of printed copies also emerged, and as a result of the label's shady work, Kaldrad and the BBH released a statement in which they urged people not to support the distribution of what the band considers bootleg in all respects.

5 - Kaldrad's statements taken from the brief band's biography published on the Stellar Winter website ([www.stellarwinter.org](http://www.stellarwinter.org)).

6 - It is curious that this album, recorded around 2000, somehow managed to land in the P2P circles, unexpectedly circulating well ahead of its release. It is not known whether this is the reason why the actual release was delayed until 2007.

7 - From the brief biography printed on the booklet of the *Verdandi/Berustet av Kriegsdronnet* reissue released in 2006 via Stellar Winter.

8 - Raven Dark, from Brangolf ([www.thepaganfront.com/brangolf/](http://www.thepaganfront.com/brangolf/)).





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9 - Ibid.

10 - Gorruth, from *Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagon* n.1, 2001.

11 - Two impromptu tracks from the sessions of these last works will unexpectedly appear on the celebratory compilation *Hammerkrieg* as Rundagor's last music testament.

12 - From the booklet of the compilation *Hammerkrieg*.

13 - Ibid.

14 - Excerpt from the song *Dumna Serbia* by Warhead.

15 - Temnozor, from *Resistance* n. 23, autumn 2004.

16 - From the booklet of *Sorcery of Fragments*.

17 - Temnozor, from *Resistance* n. 23, autumn 2004.

18 - «*Temnozor's old vocalist (who did the screaming vox on the Sorcery... tape) and their old guitarist appeared to be wrong persons, but they are just used and then booted out, like stupid cheap whores they are*», from *Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagon* n.1, 2001.

19 - Temnozor, from *Resistance* n. 23, autumn 2004.

20 - Ibid.

21 - Temnozor, from *Kilim Zaibu* ([www.kilimzaibu.com](http://www.kilimzaibu.com)), 2011.

22 - The definition is not new, this same concept (and related para-religious connections) is also discussed in an interview with Hendrik Möbus by Moynihan and Söderlind for *Lords of Chaos*.

23 - Gorruth, from *Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagon* n.1, 2001.

24 - Ibid.

25 - Ibid.

26 - Temnozor, from *Kilim Zaibu* ([www.kilimzaibu.com](http://www.kilimzaibu.com)), 2011.

27 - Moloth, interview with the authors, March 2012.

28 - Moloth, from *Satan's Sadist* n.88, September 2010/January 2011.

29 - Moloth, from *Nunaneh* (<http://nunaneh.com>), 2005.

30 - Ibid.

31 - Moloth, from *Satan's Sadist* n.88, September 2010/January 2011.

32 - «*This drawing is based on my photo taken in 2006, before I got jailed... The point of this picture is the white man's craving to become something more than merely human - joining the space absolute, rising above the world around, and detaching himself from the philistine pseudo reality*». Moloth, interview with the authors, March 2012.

33 - Moloth, from Satan's Sadist n.88, September 2010/January 2011.

34 - Moloth, interview with the authors, March 2012.

35 - Ibid.

36 - Just as an example, try to compare the demonic interpretation of *Echo of Forthcoming War*, included in the live album *Sturm*, sung by Alexey with the guttural and monolithic version recorded as the opening track for *WotanJugend*.

37 - Moloth, interview with the authors, March 2012.

38 - Ibid.

39 - Excerpt from the song *Russian Warrior* by Harza.

40 - Holdaar, from ThyDoom.com (<http://thydoom.com>), July 2008.

41 - Wewelsburg, from Aryan Music (<http://aryanmusic.net>), July 2006.

42 - Ibid.

43 - Ibid.



# The Yoga of National Socialism Spear of Longinus and the Australian crooked crosses

*«THIS THOUGH IS WHAT PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND. IT IS THE MUSIC. THE MUSIC IS THE LIFESTYLE. AT THE RISK OF OVERSIMPLIFYING WE ARE NAZI. PAGAN. SATANISTS»<sup>1</sup>*

[SPEAR OF LONGINUS]

**D**uring the years of the Second World War, General Douglas MacArthur made Brisbane - coastal metropolis of Eastern Australia - his base of operations for Allied military maneuvers in the South-western Pacific, allocating about a million American troops. One has to wonder what the distinguished American strategist would have said upon discovering that, fifty years later, the capital of Queensland would bear one of the bands considered the most responsible for the birth of the local NSBM scene... The ensemble in question is Spear of Longinus, named after the Roman legionary who pierced Christ's ribs on the summit of Golgotha. It is no coincidence that, over the years, Spear of Longinus have been a thorn in the side of the metal scene, taking their repeated musical assaults into account, all in the name of a refined (and easily procured) media scare.

The band was born from the ashes of Equimanthorn, a group destined to reach a dead end, as its meager output was limited to a five-track demo dating back to 1992. Musical differences combined with ideological disagreements pushed the frontman, Camazotz, and his comrades to desert Equimanthorn, and later dismiss the project as an ordinary cover band devoid of any meaning. During the first few months of 1993, Spear of Longinus saw the light, and their change of





1993, a very early line-up of *Spear of Longinus*:  
Camazotz (vocals and guitar), Baal Mjolner (drums) and Anton (bass)

direction, especially on a conceptual level, was striking to say the least. The name is inspired by the famous book *The Spear of Destiny* by Trevor Ravenscroft, and the concept is ambitious and risky at the same time: an infamous mixture of magic Hitlerism so explicit and brazen that, more than fifteen years after their debut, they still alienate more than a few willing listeners.

*«The spear, according to rumors and legends, would give power of supremacy to those who owned it. It had belonged to important historical figures, such as the Emperor Constantine and Charlemagne, founders respectively of the Byzantine Empire and the Holy Roman Empire. Why should it not propitiate the Thousand Year Reich that Hitler dreamed of? So the weapon of the Roman legionary Longinus could really appear important in the eyes of the then twenty-year old Führer, ever since he saw it in the Schatzkammer of the Hofburg museum»<sup>2</sup>.*

Two years of frantic activity brought about a debut demo, aptly entitled *Nazi Occult Metal*, which, in a scene that had not yet been codified and therefore had no clear references, offered itself as a forerunner of the first real wave of Nineties NSBM. It was 1995, and this professionally printed, limited edition white tape, decreed and in a sense

institutionalized the sulphurous combination of heavy metal with themes overtly influenced by dark currents of a National Socialist nature. Five tracks of lo-fi brutal thrash/black that are opened with no frills by the raw sequence of riffs of *Rite of Ragnarok*:



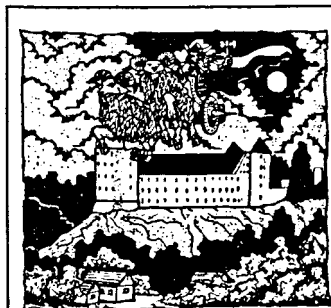
*«An axe age, a sword age  
The world sinks in ruin  
No man shall spare the other  
Come forth to receive the mark of fate  
And prepare yourself for battle»*

In the lyrics there are clear references to the sacred books of Norse mythology, with the Wagnerian twilight of the gods combined with a series of poetic references and cryptic esoteric quotes. This modus operandi spreads across all the songs (*The Ibis of My Lost Soul, Riders of a Cold and Violent Wind...*, *Jarls Quest Eternal*), proving they have fully learned Burzum's lesson, which calls for black metal bound to the suggestions of lyrics with a cryptic and evocative quality. However, this spell is readily broken in the infamous fifth and final track, the eponymous *Nazi Occult Metal*, ideally divided into three acts, the first of which is firmly in the hands of the band, while the other two host a speech by Adolf Hitler on the millennial fate of the Third Reich, followed with a harangue by Rudolf Hess.

In *Nazi Occult Metal*, we find the ideological culmination of a metal band ready to take on the role of diligent standard-bearer of the National Socialist creed. This form of worship has little to do with the usual administrative and social policies, preferring to throw itself headlong into a sectarian dimension, that is both magical and Luciferian. Let's discover from Camazotz's own words how Spear of Longinus became the mouth-

piece for a highly idealized Nazism, markedly personal and visionary. Acting as a sort of path to ascension and liberation that leads to the evolution of the human being, from the condition of man to that of super man.

*«I believe the Nazis were not the monsters that have been created from them, and even if they*



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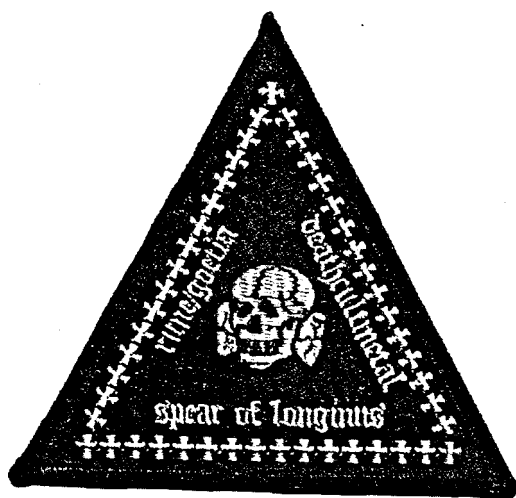
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Atlantis legend, surrounded by a  
runic S.O.L., and regularly written  
"Spear of Longinus". On both arms  
an Iwaz cross ✚, and on the black  
a wolf's hook. 47



Two rare examples of official merch produced during the years by Spear of Longinus: the first long-sleeve shirt (late Nineties) and the patch "Death Cult Metal" produced by the French label Forgotten Wisdom (2010)

did indulge in some undesirable acts, should we disregard any positive achievements accomplished? Surely; what nation has showed such an incredible "will to power" and "Zest for life"? Don't forget Hitler had an entire nation/people/volk 100% behind him, surely this was not bought about by force or any other form of manipulation/terrorism. Those people had very much renewed pride in themselves, their folk, their achievements, their heritage and everything to do with their Germanic/Teutonic/Aryan existence; spiritually, mentally and physically. The true Nietzschean Superman. See through the lies, distortions. These are the things we imply. Not close minded racist bigotry! Perhaps a thorough blend of pagan/black/occult/mystical/western metal is another way of saying it.

Pure traditional Satanism which is in fact the true undiluted pagan/western way. The truth is we don't know what really went on back then, politics/beliefs/intentions; etc. So let's build on those virtuous merits worthy of us. Don't forget the Nazi strove for alternative forms of power and way of life. As well as their natural affinity/knowledge of all things natural/mother earth etc. and a return to more natural, accommodating beliefs, lifestyles and values!

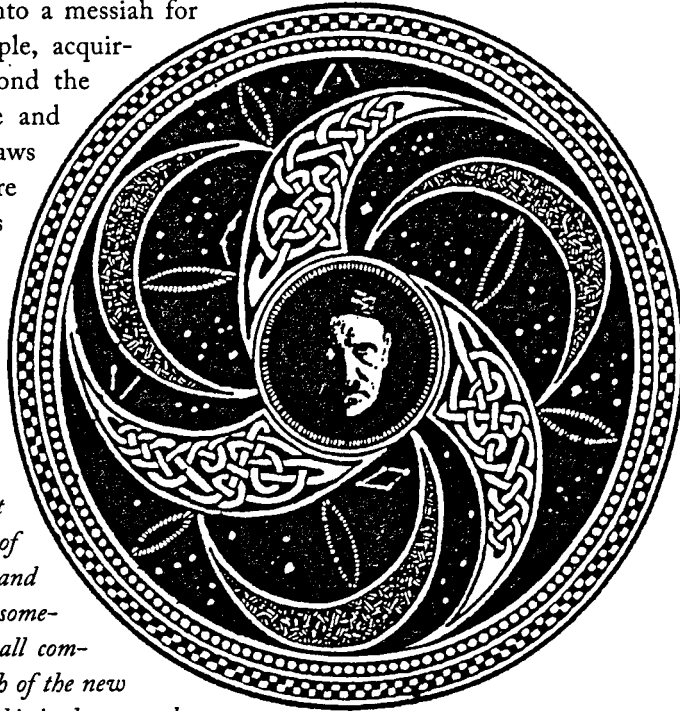
Rather than just the pure hate of most black metal bands nowadays [...] this is "Nazi Occult Metal"<sup>3</sup>.

When reading Camazotz's statements, one cannot help but notice how the set of occult suggestions animating the band seem to borrow heavily from a certain



historiography with a fantasy imprint - that the readers of *The Morning of the Magicians* by Pauwels and Bergier hold dear - rather than the rigorous investigations of many other academics. In a certain way, in the folds of this "Nazi occult metal" lies the obsession of those who believe they can access a bridge that connects the unreal with the real, imbued with magic, mysticism and spirituality, between East and West. In this other dimension, the Führer of the past century evolves into a messiah for the entire Aryan people, acquiring qualities well beyond the sphere of the sensible and realm of natural laws (think of how, on more than one occasion, this same band described Adolf Hitler as Satan, calling him "a rebel" and at the same time "a misunderstood avatar").

*«If you can't see that Hitler was a conduit of cosmic force to force the hand of man to action, is to me something ridiculous beyond all comprehension.. [...] The birth of the new aeon demands its blood, this is the natural way»<sup>4</sup>.*



Theirs is a covert war which, as we shall see later, will find the most diverse footholds, acquiring and blending Atlantean ideas, martial arts, Eastern European meditation practices, Nordic pantheons and plain old Hitlerian war propaganda.

The idea that all this is nothing more than yet another shock rock tactic (a move that would still be considered commercially suicidal) is quickly swept away by the band which, from the first demo and all the productions in the years to follow, has not taken a step back nor have they sought to obscure their target with hypothetical explanations:

*«We are a very honest and sincere band. I call a spade a spade, this is the only way to be, and we expect the same in return; unfortunately this is a rarity in this world. The term "Nazi Occult Metal" is also my lifestyle»<sup>5</sup>.*



# Pro-Nazi band hit sour key

A BRISBANE "nazi occult metal" band has been attacked for promoting racism and anti-Semitism.

Jewish leaders said the band, Spear of Longinus, was dangerous and could be prosecuted under anti-vilification laws being considered by the State Government.

The Australia/Israel Review said the band was just one of a growing number of white supremacist groups emerging in Australia.

Most have a heavy emphasis on Nazism in both their stage performances and lyrical content.

Many hold their strongest support among skinheads.

The three-piece Annerley-based band, whose self-proclaimed philosophy is based on the "enlightenment and bonding of all Aryan tribes", have a growing following in Australia and overseas.

Named after the weapon that is believed to have ended Jesus Christ's life, the band said its music was "100 percent racial".

The band already has a web site, in which it boasts its music is based on "True Nazism, but not in the new-age limp style.

By MICHAEL MCKENNA

as it acknowledges the dark cyclic destructive-creative forces".

In an interview published in the Melbourne-based skinhead magazine Blood and Honour, the band insulted Roman Catholics and Jews, and admitted to belonging to "white racist" organisations in Brisbane.

Guitarist and singer "Camazotz" said in the interview that their music was all about white supremacy.

"It is extremely important for us to fight this holy war in today's conditions, as this is our present reality.

"Be 100 percent racial, but learn and grow. Heritage is the key to freedom, not a shackle.

"I am Aryan, it is in my blood."

In the past few years, Australia has fast become a force on the international Nazi music scene, mainly through two bands - Fortress and Squadron. Both have released successful albums overseas.

The Sunday Mail could not contact Spear of Longinus for comment.

Remaining on this path, we find that statements like this within the liner notes of the demo cannot be ignored: *«Stop blaming blacks, Jews and immigrants. Be real Aryans and take control of your Wyrld»*<sup>6</sup>. This is followed by the usual list of greetings and thanks, including prominent names such as the Order of Nine Angles, Kerry Bolton and Uncle Adolf - though some might legitimately wonder what the "uncle" in question might say about a Spear of Longinus album, and whether he would have approved of the ideas expressed by these "black soldiers of the order" living in Australia:

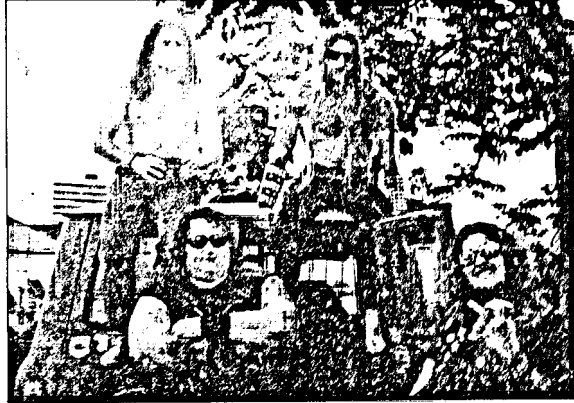
*«One day people will realise that the National Socialists (the true) of then were the last great power/chance to stop the very same pigs who now control this planet Earth, temporally [...] To me, National Socialism stands for all that is mighty, noble, just, imperishable and... archaic, a true revival of the old ways»*<sup>7</sup>.

During a career spanning over fifteen years, Spear of Longinus' proper albums can be counted on one hand. Relegated to Brisbane, life does not seem to treat them particularly well. We are talking about an ideologically and geographically isolated band, with just a handful of gigs behind it, and no performances abroad, that is more or less attacked by everyone: journalists, biker gangs, local authorities, Christian skinheads... and yet, despite the plethora of considerable obstacles, this ensemble chose to proceed along the path they stubbornly embarked on with *Nazi Occult Metal*.

*Spear of Longinus make the local headlines for their alarming Nazi Occult Metal*

The German NSBM label Burznazg<sup>8</sup>, headed by members of the notorious band Absurd, bet substantially on Spear of Longinus' potential back in 1997, releasing their first LP, *Domni Satnasi*, followed by the CD *Nada Brahma* two years later. The latter, however, did not have an easy life: released in 500 copies, it was largely confiscated by German authorities during a raid at Burznazg's headquarters, effectively sanctioning the closure of the label and the disappearance of the album from the music market. The CD soon became a coveted collector's item, whose price was further inflated, not so much by the small amount of copies in circulation, but for the cursed aura that shrouded the Australian band<sup>9</sup>.

Apparently, nothing could seriously hinder the intents of Spear of Longinus, who in the following years, released one of the most famous and extravagant albums in the history of NSBM: *TYONS*, which stands for *The Yoga of National Socialism*.



*«Going on from above we can see how politics and religion or spiritual pursuits are both supposed to "raise" the human condition and experience. It indicates to us again how we can only improve through a totalitarian regime. Externally connecting everything, so to internally, but with the internal regime governing the external. Not arse about as it is now. When we find this connexion things of course run much more naturally»<sup>10</sup>.*

*«Buddhism and National Socialism both emphasize discipline and a rational, non-superstitious, non-dogmatic approach to decoding philosophy, nature and the sciences»<sup>11</sup>.*

Released in 888 copies by the American label Vinland Winds Records in 2002 on black vinyl (there is also another, more limited, version on red vinyl), this bizarre Indo-Germanic fetish is the manifesto of a utopia only partially achieved. It was supposed to consist of fifteen songs, and according to the original plan, it should have kept that abrasive style full of anger borrowed from punk, that Spear of Longinus seemed to be particularly fond of; but unfortunately for them, the choice of a new recording studio, along with time and monetary constraints, compelled them to forcibly finish the job over a long 48 hour session: too brief a time to nail the imprint and style they were looking for. The end result led the band to scrap a third of the recorded tracks, while a mix that is too soft and clean, and devoid of that particular "necro" bite, distorts the entire work. Their disappointment, mingled with the knowledge that they had an

unsatisfying work on their hands, can be clearly perceived by the simple fact that Spear of Longinus decided to release the album while mutilating the title they had chosen; although many may have already found the meaning of the acronym *TYONS* odd, it was actually only a fragment of the overall vision: in the band's vision, the album should have borne a very different, much longer, articulate and resonant name: *The Swastikalotus and the Yoga of National Socialism*.

The artwork for *TYONS* boasts a triumph of colors and iconographic references both mystical and oriental in nature: acid color schemes overflow everywhere, mixing Indo-European touches with symbolic details that go back to ancient pre-Christian civilizations. Even the usual face painting, particularly meaningful to the black metal scene of that time, was transformed from the traditional mask in funereal white and black tones on Camazotz's face into a solar tribal war mask made of a multicolored mess.

The album can be unsettling from the start: as soon as you put the needle on the platter, the opening track called *N.W.O.* (acronym meaning "New World Order"), starts with the voice of Arnold Schwarzenegger sampled from the movie *Conan the Barbarian*, where to the question, «*Conan, what is best in life?*» he replies «*To crush your enemies, to see them driven before you, and to hear the lamentations of their women*». Considering how the album was mistreated in the mixing phase, we can still save a few tracks on a technical level, among which the impetuosity of *Volcanic Winter*, the ritual-thrash spirals of *Dancing Shiva* and the stone hard punk instrumental called *Stuka Song* stand out.

Despite an explicitly provocative and surreal title, *TYONS* cultivates a spiritual dimension on a lyrical level that is dedicated to mythology and mysticism, with no direct references to the political doctrine professed by the band. The closest connection to National Socialism (rather than to Yoga) on this album can only be found in the second to last song titled *Rommel (When Yogans March to War)*, that was inspired by the book about the German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, *The Trail of the Desert Fox*, an extensive biography written in the Seventies by the notorious British revisionist David Irving.

After a quick playback, it is very easy to brand this album as a modest thrash/black eruption, as unlikely in its intent as it is noisy and confusing (in this regard, just read the merciless review by Joshua Buckley in the in-depth dossier of this chapter). But it would be a mistake to superficially dismiss it: although from a purely musical point of view, it is not one of Spear of Longinus' best works, despite its obvious limitations and flaws *TYONS* has managed to define a signature style, which identifies the Australian band among a thousand others.

Five years after the release of this analog scandal, the French label Forgotten Wisdom Productions released its ideal sequel on tape: *...and the Swastikalotus*, a tangible document of the tracks that were not included on the 2002 album, revised and strengthened by the addition of six previously unreleased songs. Curiously, the printed insert of *...and the Swastikalotus* compensates for the paucity of Nazi propaganda in

TYONS with a dozen aphorisms and quotes by Adolf Hitler, Joseph Goebbels and others, interspersed with excerpts from the works of the English occultist Aleister Crowley.

In the summer of 2008, Forgotten Wisdom Productions released the latest effort by Spear of Longinus: *Rune/Goetia*, an MCD focused on the evocation of the Futhark, the ancient runic alphabet originated in Northern Europe, honored here in a series of dark metal outbursts with each track dedicated to a specific glyph (F, U, Th, A, and so on). Yet another hidden puzzle finds the *Ars Goetia*, the ancient practice of demonic invocation, honored by feral electrical mantras with voices and guitars saturated in a single dense magma of sound.

As if that were not enough, in the fall of 2012, Forgotten Wisdom Productions triumphantly announced the complete reissue of the essential *Nazi Occult Metal* on CD. A tangible sign of an unfailing interest and support that continues to persist around what could be defined as one of NSBM's main bands, although Camazotz, while recalling their early years, tends to be bitterly melancholic:

*«For sure at that point there was a very strong current making itself known to a lot of people but we didn't seem to harness it effectively enough to really combat the public non-reality. Ignorance, ego and shallowness seem to again rule metal, both from the Left and the Right we suffer the plague of immaturity and crass materiality in the guise of intellectuality.*

*It seems to be nothing more than a distraction for the average»<sup>12</sup>.*



...and the Swastikalotus (2007): eclectic crowning achievement of its predecessor, The Yoga of National Socialism



The seminal Nazi Occult Metal in its latest reissue on CD (2012)



*Spear of Longinus live in action*

In spite of everything and everyone, Spear of Longinus continue to give the impression of not being willing to bow their head, nor give way. Perched in their city set on the edge of the world, the only mantra they have decided to devote themselves to can be summed up without much fanfare in the primitive and circular pace of an old battle song of theirs: *I Am War*.

*«War, I want war  
War, on the Christians  
War, on the fucks  
War  
Desolation, pain, insanity  
I want war, war  
War in the skys, war in my mind  
Total war...»*



Besides Spear of Longinus, we can trace just another band in some way similar to the spiritual/superman path undertaken by Camazotz and his comrades in Australia: Vorak, a one-man band that appeared in 1996 with a little known album of "extreme metal" pompously titled *Triumph of the Will* and only two years later would release another one (the last known of a supposedly unfinished "Nazi-Nietzschean" trilogy), *Rhetoric of the Supermen*. Scrolling through the song titles taken from each of the two albums, it is not difficult to frame the "will to power" approach of this young Australian musician: *Blitzkrieg - Fighting Under the Rune of Triumph*, *Testimony of Zarathustra: Weakness Is the Only Sin*, *Dies Irae I: Krue and Glorious Purgation of the Untermenschen*, *Blood-Reich 2000*, and above all, *Australyan Uber-Volkslieder 1* ("One Nation, One Flag, One Anthropotype")<sup>13</sup>... In short, the die is cast.

In the written notes that accompany Vorak's work we find the words of Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and the echoes of *Decline of the West* by Oswald Spengler, but also the openly racist and anti-Semitic superman attitude of writers like Ragnar Redbeard. From such bombastic words one would expect a particularly epic, if not monumental, musical offering: a heavy and deeply aristocrat metal. But it is precisely here that it all falls - indecorously - down, surprising the unsuspecting listener: Vorak's tunes are an indecipherable jumble of amorphous synthetic symphonies, a series of dissonant experiments of shabby "Nintendo metal". This impossible stack of 8-bit sounds is joined by a series of filtered screams, very close to the supposed cry of a rabid pterodactyl from the Upper Jurassic. In its creator's intents, everything is conducive to a pompous crepuscular

and explicitly Wagnerian imagery that should be sublimated in the last two tracks on *Rhetoric of the Supermen*. Inserted as bonus tracks, *O Du Mein Holder Abendstern* and *Elsa's Traum* are nothing but two extracts from the famous works by the German composer (*Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, respectively), here reinterpreted by Vorak who translates them into aseptic piano digressions. A tribute, in its own way, that seals - permanently for now - a diptych so unsettling, but also so unspeakable, that it touches unforeseen heights of sublime embarrassment. In accordance with the rule that sees a particularly bad effort stand out from the mass of a mediocre common denominator, Vorak's work, albeit deliberately redundant to the limit of a pompous (this time unintentional) parody, can do nothing but leave an indelible mark on anyone who has ever had the audacity to even attempt a simple and fleeting listen to his records.

Although not strictly belonging to the genre, despite the former bassist Ryan Marauder playing in typically black metal bands like Funerary Pit and Gospel of the Horns, it is worth mentioning the more traditional Deaths Head, a band active since 1999, playing a rude and classic thrash metal, which openly refers to the teachings of the Bay Area, despite coming from the skinhead milieu. *Onslaught*, *Hatreds Disciples* and *Kriegslied* are albums that do not shine with originality and certainly do not show technical skills comparable to the American masters, but the impact is secured by a series of musically solid tracks with lyrics recited by a voice that betrays a past in the white power circle. A further confirmation of how these environments, once solid strongholds of Oi! and suchlike, are open to heterodox contaminations and are able to market products that intercept the tastes of a wider audience, at the same time spreading their discriminatory propaganda.





More relevant to NSBM itself is the history of the Australian label War Doctrine, run by Ariersohn, who in recent years had begun a constant activity of production and distribution of music material intended for an explicitly racist audience and devoted to the cause of black metal.

*«I was first attracted to NSBM almost ten years ago. I was attracted to NSBM due to its ideological content. As I started to listen to NSBM I discovered that most bands did not actually understand National Socialism. [...] In essence a vast majority of NSBM was art glorifying the evils of the Holocaust. I believe that it is for this reason that a multitude of sub-humans became fans of NSBM despite the obvious hypocrisy in them supporting an ideology that encourages their own genocide. I founded War Doctrine to counter this situation in order to assist in the awakening of white youth. [...] NSBM serves its purpose in this awakening however the time will come when NSBM becomes irrelevant. What we require is not the evolution of NSBM. What we require now are strong individuals that dedicate themselves to their duty, that physically train themselves for armed combat and engage in commercial activities to raise the capital required to finance any future armed insurrection»<sup>14</sup>.*

The CDs printed in the course of just two years involved bands from almost every continent: Europe, America and Australia itself. The first record to see the light, however, is curiously the prerogative of an Italian band: AMBS (acronym for A Monumental Black Statue) with their album of nationalist black metal titled *Aere Perennius*, released in 2010, and followed by the American Wir Sind Thule (with *Arbeit Macht Frei*), and the Greek Freude (authors of *You Are the Front*). While the fourth title released



by War Doctrine is nothing but the personal project of Ariersohn himself, Ariertum, with the album *Mithos of the Blood*. With the succession of new titles in the catalog, the releases gradually become more and more militant and uncompromising: just think of the fifth one, a split album between two U.S. entities (Wehrwolf and the already mentioned Wir Sind Thule) called *The Order*, entirely dedicated to the U.S.-based terrorist organization of the same name and its leader, Robert Jay Mathews.



The Order (otherwise known as Silent Brotherhood or Brüder Schweigen) was a diverse group of defectors from the various galaxies of radical extremism, united by the desire to go from words to actions. In its only year of activity, the Silent Brotherhood committed a series of robberies whose ultimate goal was to raise funds to finance and, in Mathews' intents, strengthen the connection between the various currents of the white supremacist movement. The criminal escalation culminated in June 1984 when the group orchestrated the murder of Jewish radio host Alan Berg, the first of a series of designated targets; a striking action, which alerted the authorities and unleashed a fierce hunt for those responsible. Mathews' saga came to an end on December 8, 1984: hunted down by the Feds in his home on Whidbey Island, Washington, he refused to lay down his weapons and engaged in a long gunfight with the police, dying in the fire that flared up during the fight. With the dissolution of The Order and a series of exemplary sentences, both to the militants and the supporters of what is considered the first real American terrorist organization of the extreme Right, Mathews has been consigned to the history of the movement: for the followers of racial hatred he embodies a martyr of the first order, an almost messianic figure, who in their eyes, is the perfect fighter who sacrificed himself for the survival of the white community.

Not surprisingly then, on the CD *The Order* there is the complete recording of Mathews' call to arms, delivered at the National Alliance convention back in 1983 (the text is reproduced in full in the booklet), put in between the songs of the two bands involved. *The Order* is therefore a practical demonstration of how a black metal record can be transformed into an instrument of uncompromising and explicit political propaganda. Emblematic, in this sense, the gloss of the press release issued by the label: «*War Doctrine is proud to present this dedication to The Order. May their deeds inspire our actions!*»<sup>15</sup>.



The sixth and final "physical" product on War Doctrine is by the mysterious BloodSoil, and is an instrumental work modeled on strict Wagnerian arias not too far from what is already known and appreciated by the followers of the martial industrial scene, well represented by bands such as Germany's Triarii or Sweden's Ardit. It is actually the last CD released by the Australian label: the following work was available only as a digital download (graphics, and sound files in mp3 format, all accessible directly from the War Doctrine website), a logistic makeshift that seemed to be the



direct result of a boycott by printing shops and typographies. The album in question, announced well in advance and described by the press release as a real milestone of NSBM, is *This Time the World* by Waffenbrüder, a band formed in 2010 that - almost inevitably - involves Ariersohn himself. The band makes no mystery of its own mission of ardent Nazi propaganda («*The name Waffenbrüder was chosen to convey our ultimate purpose; armed insurrection*»<sup>16</sup>), releasing a politicized black metal album that is particularly fierce and muscular, with blatant titles such as *The March of the Aryans*, *Adolf Hitler, Saviour of the Aryan Race* or *Everlasting Aryan Supremacy*.

The cover of *This Time the World* (a phrase originally coined by the historic leader of the American Nazi Party, George Lincoln Rockwell) is as explicit and radically programmatic as one might expect, especially given the title chosen by the band. The artwork consists in a swastika in the foreground, and in the background it is possible to see an SS army marching on four specific countries: Britain, the United States, Russia and China. All in all, it is not too hard to imagine why War Doctrine has failed to find a factory willing to deliver a product so overtly controversial...



«Initially I had thought it was beneficial to operate in Australia due to our social and political climate allowing us to produce propaganda without censorship, however recently I found this was no longer the case: War Doctrine was unable to locate any production companies in Australia willing to produce Waffenbrüder's - *This Time the World* [...] All following War Doctrine releases will be mp3 downloads only because as we progress our message will become stronger»<sup>17</sup>.

Proceeding in accordance with this new recording policy, the imminent release of The White God's debut album was announced; the title is *Black Metal White Supremacy*. An album that, according to War Doctrine, will be a tool of real education and propaganda in the original spirit of black metal. Or at least in its intentions, considering that Ariersohn's rabid and uncompromising radicalism soon had to come to terms with the unforgiving apathy of his local microcosm. In fact, in the summer of 2012, War Doctrine officially shut down, and not without throwing one last invective against those who have betrayed the very essence of the neo-Nazi cause and did not support its efforts. Anyway, putting aside the musical experience, there is no doubt that the work of Ariersohn will be pursued in even less reassuring ways:

*«I will not reveal my activities however I will make the following statements: I will engage in whatever strategies necessary during the course of my life to ensure that this world is purified of all that seek to halt the coming Aryan Imperium. To those that oppose us; do not fear the overt rise of National Socialism, fear the covert rise of National Socialism: in the governments of the world, in the militaries of the world, in the financial institutions of the world. The Third Reich never capitulated»<sup>18</sup>.*

This provides further proof of how, even in the remote Southern lands, the merger between black metal and National Socialism has transcended the simple artistic dimension, assuming the role of modern vehicle for active propaganda. Unlike other metal sub-genres only devoted to entertainment, NSBM becomes a contemporary instrument through which it is possible to decline past ideologies in new and sometimes bizarre forms, totally rejecting the logic of the music market: the people involved (often militants devoted to the idea, rather than the music) do not pursue the goal of a successful career, but rather want to disseminate, support and, ultimately realize the fundamental principles of an idea that seemed to have permanently waned sixty years ago.

## Notes:

- 1 - Spear of Longinus, from In Your Face Magazine n.12, 1995.
- 2 - G. Drioli, *Abnenerbe - Appunti su scienza e magia del nazionalsocialismo*, Ritter Edizioni, Milano 2011.
- 3 - Spear of Longinus, from Key of Alocer n.4, 1994.
- 4 - Spear of Longinus, interview with the authors, January 2012.
- 5 - Spear of Longinus, from Vis Nox, 1996.
- 6 - A term referring to the Nordic culture related to the concept of fate and destiny. Interpreted also as "higher law", or predestination of man.
- 7 - Spear of Longinus, from Vis Nox, 1996.
- 8 - Darker Than Black's sister label, whose name is an implicit tribute to Burzum, will be short-lived due to an investigation by the German police that shut it down - along with Darker Than Black - shortly after its second release.
- 9 - *Nada Brahma* will be available again a few years later both in LP and CD format, thanks to the interest of the Spanish black metal label Death to Mankind (later renamed Die Todesrune Records, and finally Deathrune Records). These reissues will be further enhanced by the inclusion of the controversial debut demo, in addition to the unreleased video of a show they played in Brisbane in the summer of 1996 (on the CD version).
- 10 - Spear of Longinus, from Hail Metal ([www.hailmetal.com](http://www.hailmetal.com)).
- 11 - Spear of Longinus, from American Nihilist Underground Society ([www.anus.com](http://www.anus.com)).

## THE YOGA OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

12 - Spear of Longinus, interview with the authors, January 2012.

13 - The piece, for piano only, lavishly traces the melodic line of the song *Six Ribbons*, written by the famous Australian singer-songwriter Jon English. Whether it is a deliberate choice to celebrate the nation, the flag and the anthropotipo (Australian), as the subtitle recites, there is no way of knowing.

14 - Ariersohn, interview with the authors, January 2012.

15 - From the liner notes in the booklet of the split CD *The Order*, 2011.

16 - Ariersohn, interview with the authors, January 2012.

17 - Ibid.

18 - Ibid.

# The Dance of Shiva

*SPEAR OF LONGINUS - THE YOGA OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM (VINLAND WINDS, 2002)*

REVIEW BY JOSHUA BUCKLEY

With a title worthy of Dr. Demento, this would seem to be one of the more aberrant manifestations of underground pop culture, a postmodern pastiche that is all the more ironic for its apparent sincerity. But this is merely one ex-

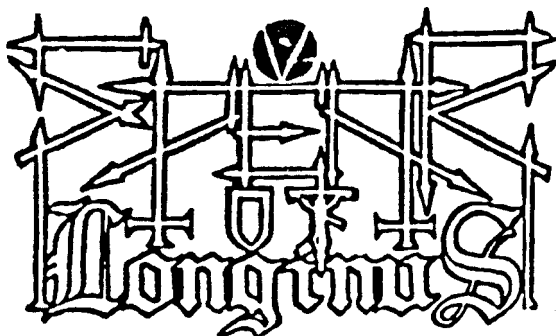
ample of a whole genre of music - call it "Nazi occult metal", or "National Socialist Black Metal". This is how the movement's followers describe the style, and, by all appearances, they seem to take themselves quite seriously. "Grimnir", who runs the Vinland Winds label, is a member of the late



William Pierce's extreme racist National Alliance, which now seems intent on pandering to skinheads and black metallers. This strange marriage of hardcore racist politics (whose elder statesmen are often the last vestiges of Goldwater conservatism and the segregationist Deep South) and alienated, anti-social youth culture is a testament to the bizarre sociological dynamics of modern (and especially modern American) political extremism.

Over the years, a number of Ásatrú and heathen-related publications have chronicled the rise of heavy metal music with distinctly Germanic and pagan overtones. Many of these "heathen metal" (or "Viking metal") acts have cultivated this aspect of their personas to great effect - producing music that can be both inspired and inspiring. Ultimately, however, most extreme metal bands still fall back on the schlock Satanism that has always been the stock and trade of the genre. This is neither the imaginative iconoclasm of Satanic High Priest Anton LaVey, nor the intellectualized self-actualization theology of rival Satanist Michael Aquino. Rather, heavy metal Satanism tends to belie a sort of adolescent antinomianism. It is a desperate lashing out at the white-bread, middle-class world from which it issues, a final cry of defiance before the realities of adulthood set

in. In the 1980s, in the wake of the McMartin preschool case and a host of supposedly "Satanic" suicides, the media was quick to cast Satanism as a viable threat to Western civilization, or at least something every God-fearing churchgoer should keep an eye on. But in the 1990s, the Satanic aesthetic fared considerably worse: it was relegated to joke status as youth culture became savvier, or at least more cynical. It was inevitable that kids with a taste for shock value would be forced to look elsewhere for an emblematic totem to express their alienation. And where better to look than Hitler? While virtually every other moral evil in our society has been relativized, Hitler remains the West's sole secular evil, a man virtually everyone feels comfortable condemning as "evil".



*Spear of Longinus' first logo*

Despite their ability to mouth slogans fed to them by their elders in the "movement", this seems to be the real motivation underlying most Nazi rock music. Regardless of its ideological pretensions, skinhead music (for example) has always been characterized more by generalized nihilism and misanthropy than political commitment (most far-Right leaders who have attempted to organize the skinheads have quickly realized



that their youthful charges are primarily interested in fighting and drinking beer). But *The Yoga of National Socialism* may be the oddest example yet of the percolating strangeness now festering on the margins of youth culture. Unlike most black metallers, who have typically donned white "corpse paint" (reminiscent of Tim Burton's lovable freak *Edward Scissorhands*), Spear of Longinus's lead singer appears in a garish grease-paint mask that makes him look like a cross between a Maori warrior and a member of the Insane Clown Posse. In an unexpected nod

to New Age eclecticism, S.O.L.'s "Camazotz" peppers his interviews with allusions to Freemasonry, Buddhism, Taoism, rune magic, yoga, Gnosticism and Tai Chi - all subjects about which he seems to know very little. Nevertheless, most of these references crop

up on *The Yoga of National Socialism*, although the group's incomprehensible brand of Nazi Satanism takes pride of place. After starting things off with a sample from *Conan the Barbarian*, songs like *The Sine of Satan* is 56, *Stuka Song*, *Rommel*, and *Shiva Dancing* (as well as the inexplicably titled *Piano Concerto No. 9*) demonstrates the band's competent, but ultimately mediocre thrash metal abilities. That anti-racist watchdog groups could perceive this sort of thing as a threat to the dominant political and social order (or anything else, for that matter) is simply laughable. If there is anything "frightening" about Spear of Longinus, it is that they and their ilk may be the unexpected byproduct of a rampantly permissive, fragmented society, where anything - and everything - goes.

Joshua Buckley

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*land of the free  
home of the brave*

# American Widerstand

## White power and black metal

«...I HAVE MET SOME FANTASTIC, BRILLIANT PEOPLE THAT ARE SATANISTS, SO I RESPECT THE MOVEMENT AS BEING ABLE TO ATTRACT AND INSPIRE SOME WORTHY MEN AND WOMEN. I THINK THAT THE RACIALIST MOVEMENT ULTIMATELY BENEFITS FROM HAVING SATANISTS INVOLVED»<sup>1</sup>

[GEORGE BURDI]

**T**he statement which opens this chapter was given by George Eric Hawthorne, aka George Burdi, in the pages of *The Black Flame*, one of the most influential satanic magazines circulating during the Nineties. Looking at the North American continent, Burdi was a dramatically important character for the rise and spread of the white power music scene (and the like) during that hectic decade close to the Third Millennium: thanks to him, within a short span of time, NSBM - American and non - was able to make inroads into environments that were considered off-limits only a few years earlier, into scenes that were absolutely impenetrable and angrily impervious to anything that did not conform to skinhead Oi!/RAC. Just imagine the unlikely reception that a certain type of extreme metal would have received.

*«Well, there is a lot of resistance to Satanism among racials, mainly due to lack of knowledge, and a residue of Christianity. But we are getting tons of letters from Satanists black metal and death metal bands, as well as lots of fans of Satanic music. [...] I judge people based on their individual value, not based on whether or not they attach the correct label to themselves. Unfortunately, many skinheads don't feel that way. But I like to push every issue that upsets them, because it gets them to think about the things that they try and avoid»<sup>2</sup>.*

George Burdi was born in Canada in 1971 and grew up in the suburbs of Toronto, with a solid family background. Of Italian origin, he was raised a practicing Catholic, attending private schools as well as involving himself in numerous extracurricular activities. In short, a very regular and already rather predictable life. But during his adolescence, an encounter with his girlfriend's father disrupted his placid and quiet years, instilling a racial consciousness in him that had been totally alien to his way of understanding things. The man, a former member of the Hitler Youth who emigrated to Canada years back, introduced him to heretical readings and simultaneously



instructed him by offering him a totally new vision of the world. In the eyes of the young Canadian, everything was both satisfying and amazing.

Subsequently, a chance encounter with the revisionist historian Ernst Zündel introduced him to the skinhead stomping ground, allowing him to discover the existence of an actual music scene related to the concepts of white supremacy. It was Zündel himself, disgusted by the music and the whole skinhead concept (which he considered an outrage to the National Socialist ideology) that gave him a Skrewdriver tape in order to get rid of it. Burdi literally consumed the cassette, thrilled by Ian Stuart Donaldson's voice and the relentless and aggressive sounds produced by the controversial British band.

*«The next thing I heard was that all skinheads wore Dr. Martens, so I went to some stores in Toronto looking for them. When I found the store that sold most of the docs in Toronto, I started hanging out at that store, standing outside there in my private Catholic schoolboy's*

*uniform, waiting to find a skinhead so I could talk to someone my own age. When I met my first group of skinheads, boy was I ever disappointed. I wanted to talk to them about Nietzsche and they just wanted to get a beer!»<sup>3</sup>.*



*George Burdi (in the foreground) and Jon Latvis,  
both members of Rahowa*

Despite this less than ideal initial contact, Burdi kept on track, and decided to form his own band, giving new life to the music scene of the early Nineties. Between 1990 and 1991, one of the most important bands of the North American neo-Nazi scene saw the light: Rahowa.

The name, an acronym for Racial Holy War, originated from the teachings of the Church of the Creator, founded in the Seventies by Bernhard Klassen: a U.S. church whose doctrine is based on a fierce atheism, mixed with anti-Semitism and worship of the supremacy of the white race. All of the band members were part of it, and

Klassen's writings seem to have had an influence that goes far beyond mere racial consciousness. Even today, despite having disavowed his past, Burdi admits that he became (and stayed) vegan after reading the Klassen/DeVries book entitled *Salubrious Living*.

At the time, Canada and the United States remained largely virgin territories for this kind of musical approach. The historic record labels were all in Europe, and for this reason Burdi sent multiple copies of the tape overseas after recording the four tracks that made up his band's first demo.

*«My band Rahowa had been signed on a European label called Rebelles Européens. They paid for our recording, mailed us the money to record it – four grand or something – and then disappeared. We decided to release it ourselves [...] I just kept reinvesting the money into signing more bands, because I was on a mission to get these ideas out there and proselytize. It seemed like the logical thing to do»<sup>4</sup>.*

Once the master of the first album (*Declaration of War*) was ready, Burdi decided to try and sell copies on cassette by posting an ad on Racial Loyalty, the bulletin of the Church of the Creator. He received hundreds of orders: the interest and excitement for this kind of music seemed to be very high, contacts with numerous bands scattered throughout the country were established and sales were consistent. Burdi then decided to found an actual label to serve the cause, Resistance Records, and he also compiled a catalog in order to cope with the amount of orders.

*«I said, "Instead of doing it as a catalogue, let's do a magazine. We can use all the pages in it to promote our bands". We couldn't count on positive press from the mainstream media, so we created our own alternative media»<sup>5</sup>.*

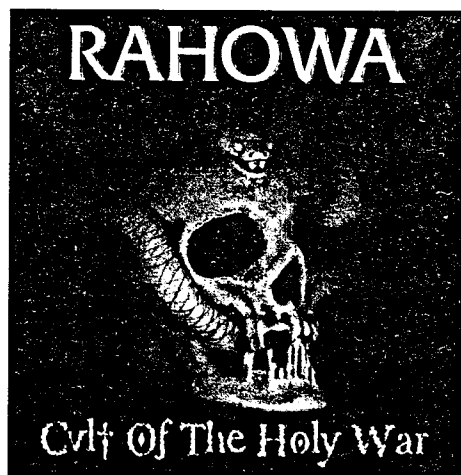




Thus the magazine *Resistance* was born, the house organ of Resistance Records, a magazine primarily focused on the promotion of records produced by the label itself, at the same time, devoting ample space to the white separatist cause with articles, interviews and insights aimed at its young readers (mainly skinheads back then). Within a couple of years, the growth of Burdi's activity was simply sensational. To counter the strict anti-racism laws in Canada, the registered office of the label and magazine was relocated to the United States, in Detroit. Bands such as Bound for Glory, Angry Aryans, and Berserkr were selling thousands of records, while *Resistance* magazine, strengthened by a particularly alluring and pro-

fessional print and layout, easily exceeded sales of 10,000 copies per issue. An unprecedented run for a sector-based publication with problematic contents to say the least.

In 1995 Rahowa's second (and last) album came out, *Cult of the Holy War*, a granite cluster of metal propaganda characterized by strong Baroque influences. Neoclassical arrangements blend with electric guitars and Burdi's deep voice, reciting lyrics inspired by the works of Nietzsche, Savitri Devi and Ragnar Redbeard. According to the frontman, the gap between the debut album *Declaration of War* is comparable to an abyss: *Cult of the Holy War* is meant to be the new benchmark for any future white power production, leaving behind all previous doubt deriving from a sound still heavily influenced by the skinhead rock scene. It was the album that legitimized Rahowa, with over 40,000 copies sold at the beginning of the new millennium, but it was also to be their merciless epitaph, after which Burdi abandoned the scene, disowning all the successes and achievements he obtained within a mere five-year period<sup>6</sup>.



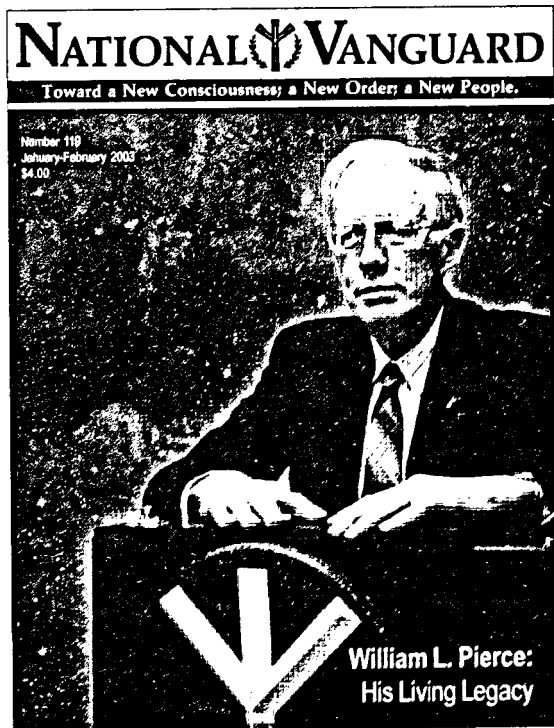
Sentenced to one year in prison for injuring a Canadian activist of the Anti-Racist Action, he served his sentence but his leadership was called into question. So Burdi chose to abandon the separatist cause, communicating in a clear and blatant way that he had taken distance from the American racist scene. His radical change of course, explained in the deposition released at the Canadian court that had convicted him before a jury of twelve white jurors, inflamed the militants across North America:

*«I just want to underscore my regret for my past activities. It's my desire to lead a different path in my life and I have been doing so for the past two years»<sup>7</sup>.*

After the test of time, including insults and death threats, but also unexpected statements of solidarity, Burdi now lives with his girlfriend of Indian origin and continues to work in the music scene as frontman of Novacosm, an electronic new age ensemble with an African multi-instrumentalist and a Jewish guitarist in the line-up. Not surprisingly, some bands currently gravitating around the new bosses of Resistance Records occasionally manifest, even after many years, offering their scathing contempt for a man they consider to be one of the greatest "traitors of the race"<sup>8</sup>.

Burdi's desertion was followed by a few years of uncertainty, during which Resistance Records went from hand to hand and risked going down, along with the belief of its original founder. But in 1999, William Pierce's National Alliance took full control of the label and the magazine, bringing the company back and moving it to West Virginia at the headquarters of the political movement founded by Pierce in the early Seventies.

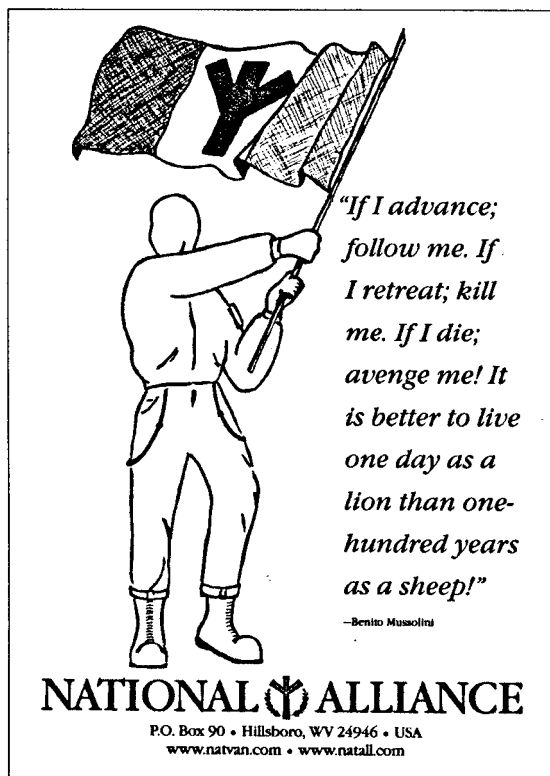
The music has a decisive significance for the purposes of indoctrination and recruitment of young dissidents among the ranks, and in this sense the acquisition of Resistance Records by one of the historical movements of racial separatism in America proved to be a particularly strategic move. Pierce, who died only a few years after he got his hands on Burdi's creation,



*The cover of the magazine National Vanguard commemorating William Luther Pierce's death*

showed that he had a clear idea about the purpose and direction to take the infamous label from the beginning:

*«Through music I want to give them [youth] more awareness and a better understanding of what needs to be done. The lyrics of our music will stick in their heads, and over time, will lead many of them into the resistance movement. Music is truly a mass medium, which reaches and influences everyone, not just those who are already politically committed».*



*Propaganda flyer of the National Alliance*

In the same interview, Pierce further stated that he wanted to offer his audience the widest possible range of music useful to the cause. *Ipsa facto*, in the same issue of *Resistance*, alongside the usual more or less well-known names in the white power scene, there is a long article that introduces National Socialist black metal to the skinhead scene. The title, sounding vaguely educational, reads: *Is Black Metal a White Noise?*

In fact, there had already been some preliminary maneuvers to try and make a commonality of purpose more comfortable and "socially acceptable" among the traditional consumers of RAC, along the lines of Skrewdriver & Co., with the new Aryan horde of young metalheads, face-painted and black-clad: five years earlier (autumn 1995) in the same magazine, an article by Stephen

O'Malley called *Nordic Darkness* offered the first overview of the black metal phenomenon by illustrating the turmoil of atavistic-terrorist revenge that was taking hold in Northern Europe for the readers. Still in business and in the middle of his militant activity, George Burdi spared no effort in an attempt to broaden the musical horizons of his supporters, bringing them closer to the metal scene. Rahowa themselves offered an attractive metal mixture, and at the same time, Burdi tried to produce bands that could somewhat distance themselves from that Oi!/RAC cliché in which their audience seemed to be forcibly confined.

Referring back to *Is Black Metal a White Noise?*, we find that the author wants to instill a number of doubts about a genre that is usually misunderstood by the skinheads. In the article, Burzum is still a predominant presence, with a careful examination of Varg Vikernes' ideological stance, besides the chronicle of his exploits, including acts of violence and arson in the name of Wotan/Odin.

*«The sound of the bands is a fierce, savaging soundtrack for the return of Wotan, who is believed to bring back the glory of the ancient Nordic folk. Resistance Magazine will thus continue to feature the most prominent bands from this genre, because we are of the firm opinion that they express Aryan awareness with no less intensity than the WP bands usually do»<sup>10</sup>.*



## Our Boss is an Austrian Painter

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*Music for the  
Discriminating  
Racist*

# PANZERFAUST RECORDS

*Among the other American labels that were active between the Nineties and the year 2000,  
one of Resistance Records' main rivals was Panzerfaust Records  
(above, a promo flyer of the record company housed in Minnesota)*

The route was mapped out, the NSBM imagery was in some way sanctioned, the virus of National Socialist black metal was released and, despite the resistance still going on in the white power scene, there was no turning back. The reluctance of the traditionalist skinhead fringe still persisted: just browse through an issue of the International Skinhead Bulletin from the same period to recognize forms of "diplomatic skepticism" about the maneuvers of Resistance Records<sup>11</sup>. The argument was then strikingly manifested in some of the letters sent to the editor by the readers of Resistance, immediately after the offending article was published. The letters were evenly split between those who

saw black metal fans as a long-haired, brainless horde with unclear ideas (mentioning as an example Varg Vikernes's various changes, from Satanism to Odinism), and those who thanked the magazine for introducing them to the black metal scene, and in particular that very fringe of heretics that make Nazism and racism the basic concepts of their interpretation of black metal.

*«A lot of those in NS black metal scenes have proven themselves true revolutionaries by practicing what they preach. It is indeed possible to be NS and not to be a skinhead or an identitarian. It is possible to be NS and likewise adhere to a darker aesthetic»<sup>12</sup>.*



The period between the old and the new millennium seemed to offer all the basic and necessary opportunities for the growth and spread of the NSBM phenomenon. In addition to the interest of parallel environments - let's not forget at that time, William Pierce was also supporting and sheltering the fugitive Hendrik Möbus of Absurd - the first initiative to institutionalize the scene came in 1999, with the release of the American compilation titled *The Night and the Fog*, which we have already mentioned several times in the pages of this book. It is a collective operation aimed at publicizing the activities of a selection of bands united by a National Socialist stance, a sort of manifesto of intent which includes names like Graveland, Absurd, Kristallnacht, Veles, Thor's Hammer, War88, and so on. *The Night and the Fog*, whose name derives from Hitler's decree dating back to 1941, is also remembered for the vital importance of the emblematic subtitle: *A Tribute to the National Socialist Black Metal Underground*. It is through these words that the term "National Socialist Black Metal" was publicly sanctioned and made official within the black metal community of that time, taking on a definite life of its own.

The anthology was put together and released by Dungeons of Darkness (a name that, not surprisingly, honours Burzum's work), a label based in Illinois and guided by Ezunoth, aka Ron Rehal, who was already known in the scene because of his black metal zine called *The Seventh Scroll*. The first issue, published in 1997, was followed by a second output heavily focused on the NS scene<sup>13</sup>, thanks to which Ezunoth gained the confidence to set up this compilation.

Shortly after its release though, Ezunoth committed suicide. At first, there was a certain disbelief among the participants and many questions lingered regarding his death (some even thought that he was killed by the FBI). But these doubts soon gave way to a far more surprising reality, and Ezunoth's comrades (back then he was personally involved in the creation and organization of the Pagan Front) discovered how this American guy, with an enviable fluency in the German language, was not the person that everyone believed. Gorruth, of the Russian NSBM band Temnozor and founder of Stellar Winter, remembers him this way:



«[The creation of the Pagan Front] ...it wasn't Ezunoth's own creation, he was just the most active with it during the first months (made a website, put out the ideological compilation CD *The Night and the Fog* and a certain number of declarations), that's all. Secondly, back in that time when Ezunoth approached us, no one here in Europe knew that this guy was mud. He showed quite a lot of intellect and dedication in his letters (signed with "14/88" by the way), behaved quite noble, so we had not too much reasons to doubt him [...] Only a pair of Ezunoth's closest friends from Chicago area [...] were aware of the truth about that Ezunoth, but they didn't mention these things to us, proving their cowardly and hypocritical nature. By the way, Ezunoth was not pakistani (it's Rainer, the mastermind of *www.burzum.com* who is half-pakistani), he was half-hindu, half-German mud and was able to speak German quite freely so he could easily disguise anyone at such a distance. Yes, he was subhuman anyway. [...] When, about a half of a year after the birth of Pagan Front, the rest of the Front members found out the truth about who this Ezunoth really was... and... well, then HE HAD TO COMMIT SUICIDE (I'm sure you know what it means) and he did it, proving once more he is a coward»<sup>14</sup>.

As a result of these developments, *The Night and the Fog* project was taken over by Totenkopf Propaganda, a label of proven Nazi faith, and the Greek label personally curated the second and the third volumes of the compilation, now considered a cult item and NSBM manifesto worldwide. Not surprisingly, both of these CDs, subtitled *The Hammer of National Socialist Black Metal* (2003) and *Underground Heathen Hammer* (2007) respectively, contain the cream of the politicized scene born within the contemporary black metal scene: names like Absurd, Bilskirnir, Graveland, Temnozor, Der Stürmer, Kroda, Thor's Hammer, Nokturnal Mortum, Dark Fury, Xenophobia...

While a project such as *The Night and the Fog*, with an uncertain beginning and ambiguous implications was able to regain credibility thanks to a new European label, back across the ocean we witnessed a resounding failure. In 2003, a sort of NSBM anthology titled *The Voice of Our Blood - National Socialist Black Metal Compilation* appeared on American soil: it was one of the first productions of the fledgling Unholy Records, which had already released a compilation on double CD as tribute to Varg Vikernes (*Visions - a Tribute to Burzum*). In fact, Unholy Records is Resistance Records' sub-label, devoted to "ideological black metal", aimed at spreading its message of propaganda to the metal audience, thanks to a roster that boasts names like Nokturnal Mortum, Grom, Pantheon, Fanisk and Thor's Hammer.

Although the foundation appeared quite solid, the release of a compilation such as *The Voice of Our Blood* exposed itself to the worst ridicule one could expect from such a product: the absolutely shameful cover was accompanied by a booklet with graphics that are embarrassing to say the least, with sixteen pages filled with typos and misspellings. Nothing seems to escape this frenzy of "militant illiteracy", as more than half of the bands involved suffer from inaccuracies, mistakes or outright misspellings of their name or the titles of their songs. In all probability, Unholy Records had invested in such an anthology





to serve as an attractive business card to the NSBM scene, which back then was seen as a growing phenomenon gathering steam, but the naive ease with which the compilation was handled - not to mention the arrogant intolerance verging on adolescent rants that exude from some statements in the booklet - decreed a merciless descent into oblivion.

If we exclude the embarrassment of the "intros" and "outros", likely attributable to the Canadian band Aryan Warlord (editors of the compilation and

authors of the mediocre opening track), the remaining selections may actually be relevant in terms of sound, thanks to several top names such as Ad Hominem, Aryan Terrorism, Wolfnacht, Grom, Before God, Temnozor and so on. Perhaps the most interesting element of the compilation concerns the obvious heterogeneity of the bands involved: we are dealing with explicitly National Socialist black metal but ultimately NSBM, rather than being a strict Nazi interpretation of typical black metal, was already proving to be a sort of all-encompassing label under which different and even conflicting kinds of music could coexist on the basis of a common ideological background.

A prime example of this commonality of views can be found in the involvement of some members of the successful RAC/white power band Bound for Glory, which gave birth to Before God at the end of the Nineties. This typically pagan band with a few hints of death metal, were commonly labeled as NSBM because of racist and anti-Christian themes in their lyrics. The only two full-lengths released in 1998 and in 2000, *Wolves Amongst the Sheep* and *Under the Blood Banner* respectively, are the manifesto of robust and convincing US metal with aggressive lyrics, often spiced with clever metaphors and allegories: in addition to the main themes about Nordic paganism, followed by warlike Viking enterprises and a severe contempt for Judeo-Christianity, the band do not neglect to deal with historical events (the title track of the second album is a tribute to Operation Barbarossa, celebrated as Hitler's great crusade against Bolshevism), nor are there a lack of songs that are explicit invectives against what the band considers the parasites of our society - drug addicts, criminals and homosexuals.

Nevertheless, the albums by Before God have given a further and decisive boost to the racist metal scene, providing a new and effective link between the hesitant skinhead scene and the dark extremism of black metal.



*Before God's complete line-up. Bound for Glory's side-project also known as «the true Minnesota Vikings»*

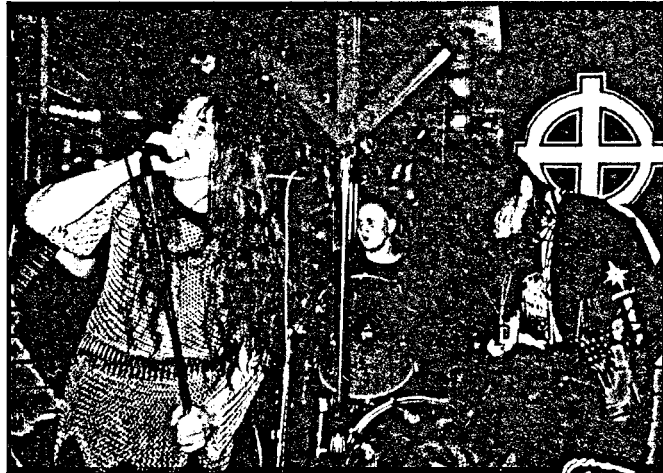


*Third reissue of Wolves Amongst the Sheep (2012) on Terrorwolfe Productions. One of the most important and representative albums of the entire NS metal scene*

*«I think it is fantastic that the skinheads and black metallers are united. [...] I am foremost a racist, and my views are strictly pro-white and I don't care how long your hair is and whether you come from Scandinavia, Poland, Germany or Russia»<sup>15</sup>.*

In more recent years, another unique spin-off of Bound for Glory has been born, known as West Wall. This heavy metal project started in 2006 with the album *Blitzkrieg Symphony #1*, offering dense, war-like death metal. The band's "historical-martial" approach (free from explicit politicized references,

as openly stated in an interview for the publication *Blood and Honour*<sup>16</sup>) positions it closer to more commercially viable bands such as Bolt Thrower, a historical English band that have dedicated their music career to themes of war and conflict in the course of human history. The following albums *Conquest or Death* (2009) and *On My Shield* (2011) further refined what was done with the debut, giving the band a certain recognition outside of the white power scene.



*Grom live on stage*

The late Nineties also saw the birth of Grom, a New York band led by frontman Ymir G. Winter (also responsible for the activities of Unholy Records), which proudly defined themselves "US.NSBM" on their albums. The ensemble was born under a lucky pan-European star, with a varied line-up of members from Poland, Romania, Belarus and the United States. On a

purely thematic level, their black metal mixed with RAC does not differ much from what has already been heard from and addressed by Before God, but the most striking difference resides in blatant and persistent anti-Semitism that is manifested at every opportunity. Grom ("Thunder" in Polish) certainly do not hide their visceral hatred for Judaism, in reality, they constantly declare it, to ensure they are the intransigent bearers of the most maximalist and orthodox NSBM.

*«We are a white power pagan metal band that supports a National Socialist ideology. [...] we are proud to be warriors in the fight against our worst enemy: the filthy Jew [...] The message of every anthem, even if it's not the main theme of the song, is our hatred for the world Jewry»<sup>17</sup>.*

Their discography is summed up by a handful of split albums (among which *Sons of Zeus* stands out, split with the Greek NSBM band The Shadow Order), the debut EP *Pagan War Machine* (2001) and the only full-length, titled *By Oak, Ash and Thorns* (2004). The latter is a perfect concentration of all the clichés of the NSBM imagery: fierce revenge against Judeo-Christian monotheism, celebration of the military

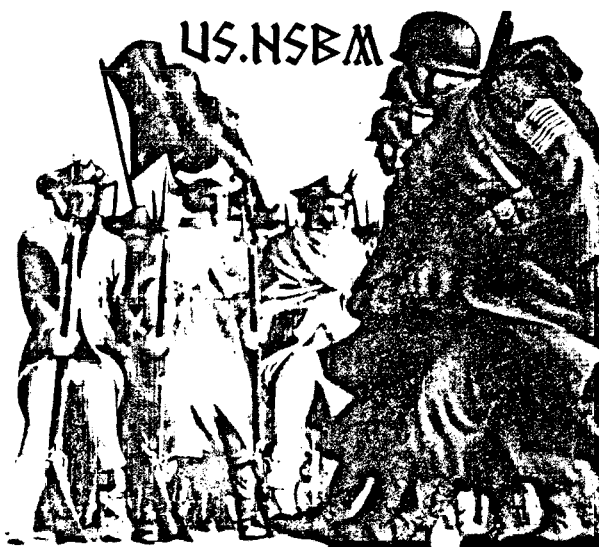
campaigns of the Third Reich, ancient rituals and Indo-European mythology, but also includes bitter flashes of old-fashioned RAC/hatecore, as in the coarse and pragmatic *One Face, One Race*:

*«Adolf Hitler, Rudolf Hess  
Ian Stuart, may they rest  
In our hearts and in our minds  
Bob Mathews, the Brüder Schweigen  
Joe Rowan, we'll keep them alive  
In our actions and our deeds»*

The hagiography of the American white Aryan resistance quietly puts historical figures of the regime (Hitler, Hess) on the same pedestal with charismatic characters of the skinhead scene (Stuart, Rowan), along with dissidents who died toting weapons against the despised federal government (Mathews).

There is enough subject matter to gather the most disparate approval, even from those who - like most of the heads of Resistance Records - candidly admit to not appreciating the icy and aggressive riffs of National Socialist black metal.

In this view, Immortal Pride from Oregon sum up the convergence of aims advocated by the label with exemplary accuracy, becoming the perfect example of crossover between scenes that seemed incompatible until a few years ago. In fact, the band has its roots in a distinctly metal background, which finds its highest expression in their first work, *ProPAGANda* (2011): fast NSBM with epic shades and songs that often juxtapose feral screaming with more classic riffs. While they are not exactly aligned musically with the styles that ensured the success of the genre in Europe, there are also differences on a lyrical level, where the ideology is approached according to local customs: gone is the iconography of the regime, the abused aesthetic references and the nostalgia for the fallen Reich, allowing room for celebration of heroes of the American white resistance, characters and



*Grom's personal graphic interpretation of the so-called US.NSBM*

events that are more recent and have had an impact on the collective imagination of the American identitarian movements.

So, the references become Robert Jay Mathews (an excerpt of his speech from the 1983 National Alliance convention opens the first track on the album, *Geist der Bruders*) or William Luther Pierce, who is honored in the title track. Pierce's voice makes its way through the distorted guitars symbolically representing the ideal closing of a circle, and the completion of a process of convergence between black metal and the white supremacist scenes that began years ago with George Hawthorne's first statements and Pierce himself.

If Immortal Pride have cleared any doubts with the first two songs on the album, proving that they are far from deliberately ambiguous, an even more irrevocable stance appears in *Race Over All*: in fact, the song publicly pays homage to Volksfront, an organization that, although it officially distances itself from any violence or activity of a terrorist nature, is based on ideas and concepts that are easily assimilated to the extreme Right<sup>18</sup>. The partnership between Immortal Pride and Volksfront was further consolidated when the band was asked to perform at the 2010 North American Althing held in Missouri, an official meeting with bands such as Section 88, Enforcer and Frontline Soldier.

To complete this corollary of quotes, the liner notes of *ProPAGANda* include a sort of compendium of the key figures of the American NSBM movement which, to confirm what was previously said, tends to unite sacred and profane. Spatial and temporal distances are nullified to draft a new pantheon of resistance to the State that pays homage to Varg Vikernes as well as Bound for Glory, Nokturnal Mortum and Blazebirth Hall, ending with Rudolf Hess, Ian Stuart, William Pierce and the Silent Brotherhood. Music, ideas and personalities from disparate latitudes which, putting aside the inevitable political and religious peculiarities and distinctions, are merged into a single reference system, shared by the vast majority of the new white resistance.



A radically different approach, albeit still ascribable to that of American NSBM, can be found in the work of the duo formed by Vitholf and Eldrig Van See: Fanisk. The name, which is also mentioned in the writings of the Viennese esotericist Guido von List, lends itself to numerous interpretations, although the main reference, as understood by the band, is to the figure and the symbolism of the phoenix.

When compared to the majority of black metal bands, the songs reflect a diametrically opposed approach, which the band labels as "Black Solar Art", offering music that is full of energy and characterized by heavy use of keyboards. Of the two albums released in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the first, the Nietzschean *Die and Become* (2002), is perhaps too anchored to certain aspects of traditional black metal, while the following *Noontide* (2004) has lyrics that are rather cryptic and refer to the

writings of thinkers that are relevant to the extreme Right, such as Nietzsche, Savitri Devi, Karl Maria Wiligut and the aforementioned Guido von List. There is nothing explicitly "wrong" in Fanisk's work, although certain images and words betray, beyond a reasonable doubt, an association with National Socialism: such as the artwork chosen for the cover of *Noontide*, with a reproduction of an image of Nazi propaganda complete with an eagle, and a swastika imprinted on the midday sun. Subsequently the album was re-issued censoring the swastika, by applying a simple black sticker over it.

That being said, the perspective used to approach the subject is still personal and not easily classified: here, National Socialism is understood as a doctrine, a shaper of events that have spanned the centuries only to resurface during the years of the Reich, having survived to this day, despite coming from a much more remote

past. Although orbiting around a similar ideological cornerstone, placing the separatist pragmatism of Immortal Pride and Fanisk's esoteric doctrines on the same level requires using a rough basis for analysis, since their visions are utterly different.

The fact remains that for both Vitholf and Eldrig, the work of Fanisk is substantially identified with the creed advocated by Hitler's doctrine, and in this regard Eldrig is extremely clear:

*«Our philosophy is simply an expression of our existence. The ideology that we hold as the highest truth comes directly from nature, just as it did for Nietzsche, our ancestors, and the National Socialists. [...] we recognize that these philosophies are so rooted in nature that they can only be seen as an extension of nature. I consider myself a National Socialist, and Fanisk is strictly a National Socialist project. Everything we do is carried out in the spirit of National Socialism. [...] National Socialism is not just another political movement; it is a spiritual movement, a youth movement – which is driven by an all-encompassing life-philosophy that is in total harmony with the infinite. It is inextricably connected to the life-force, and therefore was not defeated in World War II because it is part of a larger picture that cannot be destroyed»<sup>19</sup>.*



*Fanisk's album Noontide (2003).  
This edition is the reissue that came out the following year, with the  
black sun instead of a swastika*



*Fanisk*

noting. Conceived and recorded in a matter of days in 2006, *Kali* succeeds in enclosing the concepts of death and rebirth, and of creation and destruction within the music, in accordance with the teachings of Hindu doctrine as expressed in the works of Savitri Devi. It is no coincidence that the only words reproduced in the thin booklet belong to the writer of Indian adoption: «*Creation and destruction are one, to the eyes who can see beauty*». Musically unusual, even when compared to the work that will follow, *Kali* evolves around swirling electric outbursts that leave little room for symphonic digressions. The three main movements of the album, preceded by as many ambient intros, are assembled on simple but evocative melodies,

In addition to Fanisk, Eldrig Van See's solo project, simply named Eldrig, definitely deserves a special mention. As a band, Eldrig stays far away from the iconographic and lyrical extremism that characterizes much of the American scene, preferring a more abstract approach, focusing on issues closer to philosophy and the myth of the superman. Although these elements are present and recurring within the radical thought which animates the National Socialist scene, in this case, the musician seems to have distanced himself from specific ideological stances, as demonstrated by a brief statement that appeared on the project's MySpace page<sup>20</sup>.

Of the handful of records produced in the late twenty-first century, the first album, *Kali*, released on the English label Supernal Music owned by Alex Kurtagić is worth

*Kali (2007) album by the solo project called Eldrig*

which create a repetitive and hypnotic sound texture that evolves through slow rhythmic variations.

The next album, *Everlasting War Divinity* (2007), released by the Polish label Eastside, already known for producing the works of several well-known names (Dub Buk, Gontyna Kry, Solar Wisdom, Temnozor), develops around a solid black metal formula, characterized by a heavy use of keyboards and soaked in symphonic openings. A recurring theme is the divine and noble nature of war, seen as an inevitable destiny that man must meet: the battlefield becomes a space of spiritual confrontation as well as physical, and the ultimate goal is the conquest of a new order. The references to Ragnar Redbeard and his *Might Is Right*, appropriately quoted at the end of the booklet and whose philosophy seems to echo in songs like *The Alienation of the Wretched*, should be contextualized in the same perspective. Then in 2008, still under Supernal Music, *Mysterion* saw the light, and focused again on the work of thinkers and philosophical archetypes that are relevant to that NSBM fringe that we could call more "intellectual": the album is clearly influenced by the works of the psychiatrist and anthropologist Carl Gustav Jung and the philosopher Miguel Serrano, founder and tireless promulgator of the doctrine of esoteric Hitlerism<sup>21</sup>.



Although atypical in the American context, Fanisk and Eldrig prove once again how very different realities may actually coexist within the scene. In this regard, and as a further demonstration of how the scope of NSBM is rather convoluted and susceptible to sounds that are not strictly correlated to black metal per se, we can mention Arghoslent. This is a very peculiar band, that has been able to carve out its own space and a specific identity within a cauldron that is often inflated by Hitler clichés and generic racist invectives.

The band, responsible for unyielding U.S. death metal, was formed in Virginia at the beginning of the Nineties; for a short time they called themselves Pogrom, but they later adopted a moniker made out of the Greek words meaning "city"/"fortress" (argo), and "slave" (slent). Between 1998 and 2008 they released three full-length albums which gained a significant share of followers: *Galloping Through the Battleruins*, *Incorrigible Bigotry* and *Hornets of the Pogrom*.

Considering their genre, many may wonder why Arghoslent have such a unique following among the NSBM ranks, but this is easily explained when we take note of the subjects usually (if not exclusively) approached by the band.

*«History, philosophy, and religion are the catalysts for our works. Our lyrical themes deal conjointly with the following topics: historical revisionism, militarism, enslavement, colonization, eugenics, misogyny, genocide, tyranny, and homophobia. We deal specifically with ideas revolving around the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the conquistados, and greco-roman-teutonic-slavic grandeur. Arghoslent's mission has been only to generate prejudice, intolerance,*



and incorrigible bigotry, never to generate any income or profits. Some ideas do overlap with National Socialism/Fascism/despotism while some with social Darwinism/existentialism»<sup>22</sup>.



In their songs, these disseminators of hatred apply a discriminatory program that affects Jews, homosexuals, and - above all else - African Americans, pairing the lyrics with a convincing blend of extreme metal that would be able to compete with many of the big names on today's music market. If they decided to set aside such controversial subjects, they could probably ease their way to success, but Arghoslent have consistently inserted more elements of intolerance and prejudice with each release. As a matter of fact, they define their style as "Totalitarian Death Metal" and sign all their albums with the sentence: «*This album was recorded south of the Mason-Dixon line*»<sup>23</sup>, to reaffirm their liaison to Southern U.S. culture. Moreover, they mock homosexuals, claiming an uncompromising homophobia on their website, and do not accept merch orders from Israel as a rule, nor do they hide their intolerance towards the Jews, whom they consider the agents of a malevolent New World Order.

The African slave trade across the Atlantic Ocean is another recurring element in Arghoslent's lyrics, one of the historical events that is mentioned in more than one song and on which the artwork of their albums is focused - such as the reissue of *Incorrigible Bigotry*, which reproduces the blueprints of the ships responsible for these inhuman sea crossings. It should however be pointed out however, that the band, although explicitly racist against the African population, do not even have particular respect towards those whom they should consider their peers, that is, most white Americans, who are singled out as traitors of the stars and stripes dream. In this regard, it will suffice to read the opinion of the band's second guitarist, Holocaust, reiterated just a few months before the election of the forty-fourth U.S. President:

*«I loathe no man for the melanic concentration in his skin, nor do I admire any man for a fair complexion. The number of miserable and wretched whites on this planet is very great, to be sure (I suspect quite a few of them listen to our "white power" music). Still, I do generally regard many cultures with a sort of aloof derision. I am sympathetic towards and inspired by civilizations that have given to the world high art, great science, revolutionary*

technology, and rich culture, and the most interesting examples to me are of white Europeans. Many continents far beyond Europe have known great empires, but conspicuously sub-Saharan Africa has not. [...] But do not think for a moment that this implies a belief that if one is born white, one is superior. On the contrary, this country knows its current unenviable position because the whites here are so pathetic. Our scholastic performance is below average, our president is a cowboy buffoon, the value of the dollar is laughable, we are in a recession, culture is a foreign concept [...] White power? I think not»<sup>24</sup>.



Impervious to the criticism and various boycotts (threats to distributors who agree to sell their records, concerts reported to the authorities and promptly canceled, magazines that refuse to review their releases), the band continue along the path they have consciously undertaken. For them, 2009 was a year of intense live activity, and after a series of impromptu gigs in France, Belgium, Italy and Finland, they performed at the annual Memorial Day of the Confederate Hammer Skins upon returning to their native Virginia. This act would be something unthinkable and unfeasible only a few years earlier, considering their music genre. It takes on particular meaning when the empathy that binds the band, not only to the NSBM scene, but also to the Oi! and hatecore scenes is taken into account, which the members of Arghoslent avidly support. In fact, an ideal recording marriage between these different areas had already proven successful in 2005, with the split 7" released by Vinland Winds Records and shared by Arghoslent, Mudoven (hatecore project of Jim Crow, Vaginal Jesus' guitarist) and the standard bearers of Greek National Socialist orthodoxy, Der Stürmer.



No discussion of American NSBM would be complete without mentioning one of the heavyweights of the US underground black metal scene, a band that shares the same geographical location as Arghoslent, in addition to actually sharing some of the members: Grand Belial's Key. Formed in the early Nineties, their debut demo cassette (*Goat of a Thousand Young*, 1992) seemed to celebrate the birth of yet another Satanic band devoted to an anti-Christian platform, filled with a complacent occult formulary, but things are more than they seem. Right from the beginning, the band cultivated a

peculiarity that, with the passing of the seasons (and albums), soon brought them to the limelight and the attention of avid supporters as well as antifa activists.

In a nutshell, their “hooligan black metal” approach aims to ridicule the the Judeo-Christian doctrine by using lyrics filled with sadistic cynicism towards both the Old and the New Testament. From the point of view of this ensemble, attacking Christianity as most of the black metal scene meticulously does, cannot and should not be enough: the intention of Grand Belial’s Key is to include those that Pope John Paul II called the “elder brothers” of the Christian flock: also known as the Jewish people. On this matter, the group from Virginia has scrupulously shown their fierce intransigence.

*«If black metal is used as tool for channelling hatred then it can certainly work. The militant, pagan, and nationalist aspect of Right-wing beliefs are also proper for such music. [...] I’ve found it ridiculous for many years now the “underground” will turn a blind eye or tolerate bands who openly express Satanic, nihilistic and perverted views, sing about bestiality, drug abuse and the murder of Christians, and follow like sheep without question, yet will go out of the way to try and clean their guilt by acting offended by anything remotely Fascist, anti-Juden or National Socialist. Where do you draw the line and what makes one better than the other? It’s acceptable to burn a church and kill a priest, but we must leave the synagogues and rabbis in peace?»<sup>25</sup>.*

If we exclude the band’s early days, during which some fleeting para-Scandinavian clichés such as corpse paint made their appearance, what remains in terms of sound, image and attitude has little to do with the bulk of the contemporary scene. Apart from their logo (made by the talented and omnipresent Stephen O’Malley), the artwork chosen for each album manifests the obvious intention of creating a sort of



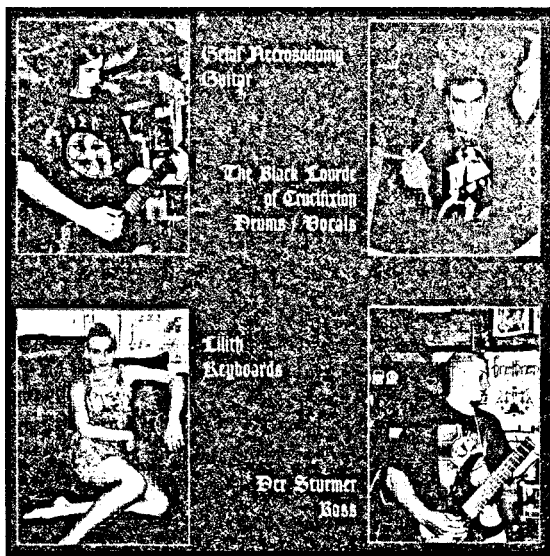
Grand Belial’s Key: «White, racist and proud!»

graphic fracture that separates each production from the mass of metal covers depicting dark and minimal tones: simple color plates are chosen, stolen from Catholic books, which depict characters and episodes from the Bible, disfigured by the band with brushes of unlikely face painting. There are those within the scene who find these graphic selections ridiculous and childish, but Grand Belial's Key have often replied with a tried and tested series of insults to this sort of criticism.

To understand the importance of this band and the attention they received from the NSBM scene, we need to familiarize ourselves with the three albums recorded between 1997 and 2005, *Mocking the Philanthropist*, *Judeobeast Assassination* and *Kosherat*. This anti-Jewish-Christian trilogy follows a well-defined path starting backwards from the Gospels of the apostles, gradually retracing the history of Christianity and its connection to Judaism.

*Mocking the Philanthropist* focuses on the Messiah of the Christians and the religious reality of his time. Although they do not reach the peaks of future albums, the insults here are plenty and hard-hitting, all at the expense of the Nazarene and his disciples. Orgies of blood and animalistic delusions accompany the story of a Jerusalem at the mercy of the legions of the demon Belial. Songs like *Foul Parody of the Lord's Supper*, *The Slums of Jerusalem* or *Castrate the Redeemer* leave little to the imagination, as they erupt with all the passion of the most bitter anti-Christian outbursts. Considering that the sacrilegious/Satanic approach to creating music has been widely sanctioned, it holds true that Grand Belial's Key would never have made the headlines thanks to a merely "evil" album: in *Mocking the Philanthropist* the real scandal took shape and substance unexpectedly, but gained notoriety thanks to German censors who noticed a few details that had not been considered initially by the band or Belgian Wood Nymph Records, the label responsible for the first edition of the album.

The controversy revolves around the album booklet. An "innocent" band photo, taken in front of a wall covered with flyers and posters of Iron Maiden and dominated by the phrase «*We have tasted the vagina of the virgin*», would likely go unnoticed were it not for a cryptic acronym placed at the bottom: "G.B.K. is B.M.f.W.P.". Although there is no explanatory note, only a bit of intuition is necessary to venture on a likely solution to the riddle: «*Grand Belial's Key is Black Metal for White People*». Further details which attracted attention are found on the page with the photos of the four bandmembers: overlooking the prosaic shot depicting the keyboard player Lilith gently resting on her couch, we find guitarist Gelal Necrosodomy wearing a Spear of Longinus shirt, and a bassist, whose *nom de plume* Der Stürmer hardly evokes reassurance for the Teutonic market, not to mention his skinhead haircut and American neo-Nazi band (Bound for Glory) t-shirt. According to Rough Trade, who were responsible for the distribution of the album in Germany, there was enough to end up in serious legal trouble, and they sent all the material back asking Wood Nymph Records to reprint the booklet in accordance with applicable German legislation.



*The incriminating pictures inside the first press of  
Mocking the Philanthropist (1997)  
by Grand Belial's Key*

*«Wood Nymph didn't even have a distro, so it was almost impossible to deal with the hundreds of returned CD's. [...] Rough Trade demanded that a new booklet be printed, and Wood Nymph said "FUCK YOU!!! We'd rather die than compromise", and they did indeed die. This is extreme underground»<sup>26</sup>.*

*Mocking the Philanthropist would be the actual swan song for the Belgian label. The 1000 copies on CD and 500 copies on double vinyl decreed bankruptcy for a label that consciously - and stubbornly - chose to stand up for its underground beliefs. At the same time, this level of publicity and at-*

*tention lifted Grand Belial's Key toward the limelight of the NSBM scene, with which they, while not actually sharing intents, have no shortage of views in common:*

*«Although our band has never addressed political or racial issues we have links to certain extremist beliefs and ideas. Grand Belial's Key is black metal since day one and although some consider our lyrics quite offensive and provocative, they cannot be considered political in any sense [...] If you are asking what I think about racism and nationalism in black metal, then I must say that I have no problem with it. What I do have a problem with is people regarding National Socialism as a mere political preference when in fact it is much more than that. National Socialism is a way of life, a particular view of society, of culture, of mythology, of pride and ethnicity. There has been an increase in national socialistic bands attempting to connect them with black metal. Some have been successful whereas some have not»<sup>27</sup>.*

*Despite this, there are plenty of caveats and a persistent form of skepticism towards a large part of this scene:*

*«Grand Belial's Key started in 1992, what NSBM movement do you remember from back then? [...] The majority of these bands are not bands, just one-man basement drum-machines and shitty amplifier recording projects with more enthusiasm than musicianship. Just because one places a Celtic cross, a swastika or a rune on a demo cover or a flyer doesn't necessarily qualify it as NS. Why should it? Furthermore, the folk engaged in starting*

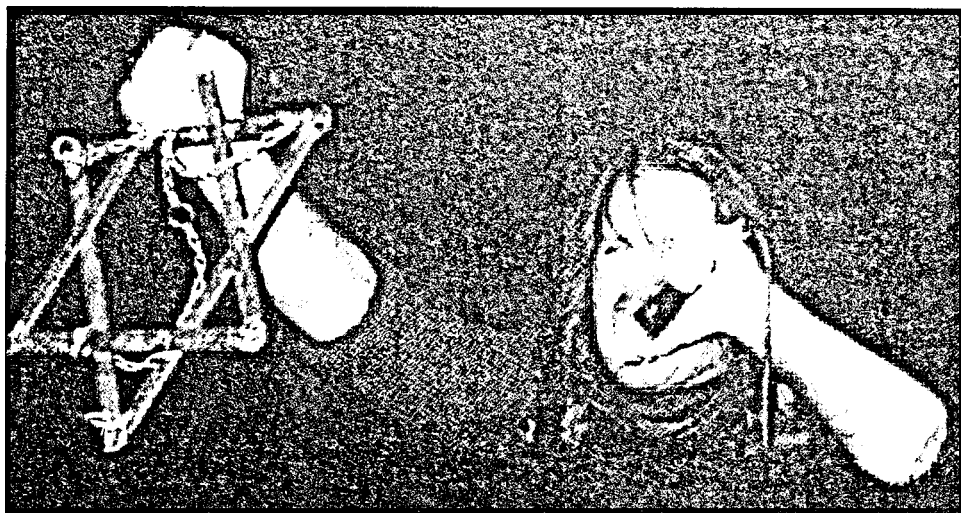
*NSBM bands are newcomers to the style/ideologies behind it, therefore approach it in a very infantile fashion [...] How many of these bands truly demonstrate musical talent or lyrical genius?»<sup>28</sup>.*

The follow up to *Mocking the Philanthropist* came out in 2001, with the caustic title *Judeobeast Assassination* offering eight tracks of renewed and invigorated blasphemy against Judeo-Christianity, starting with the liner notes: «*This album was recorded inside Mary's vaginal walls (Assembly Line Studio) During Easter (April 8-16) to ridicule the Commemoration of the Resurrection of a hobo*». If on an auditory level, they maintain the usual direction of black metal smeared with thrash and death, the lyrics are no less brutal, nor do Grand Belial's Key seem interested in retreating a single step after the scandal of the previous album in Germany. Simply read some of the verses chanted in an explicitly controversial and manifestly anti-Semitic song such as *The Shitagogue*:

«*Satanic bullets destined to perforate  
The chosen people of ZOG  
Hordes of true black metal arsonists  
Roast the red fathers of the protocol*»

The third and final installment of this corrosive anti-montheist trilogy came out four years later, in 2005: *Kosherat*. This time they exclusively target Jewish worship, systematically attacking symbols, rituals and practices of Judaism, reaching the roots of the tribes of Israel. According to the band, the ultimate song on such a fierce and uncompromising album, could only be *Vultures of Misfortune*: introduced by an excerpt of klezmer music stolen from a celebration in a synagogue, the song rages against the ancient practice of ritual circumcision, transforming it into a disturbing and perverse parody. Moreover, still unsatisfied with the amount of anti-Jewish propaganda they produced, the band chose to close *Kosherat* with two covers of Chaos 88, a Nazi punk band from New Jersey<sup>29</sup>: *Holy Shit* and *Doom Generation*.





*Grimnir Wotansvolk (aka Richard Paul Mills),  
Grand Belial's Key's ex vocalist and founder of the historical NSBM label Vinland Winds Records*

This album witnesses a significant change in the line-up, with the arrival of Grimnir Wotansvolk (also known as Grimnir Heretik) on vocals: behind this war-name is none other than Richard Paul Mills, young founder and owner of one of the best known American NSBM labels of that time, Vinland Winds Records. In the course of five years, more or less from 2000 until 2006, this New York label released dozens of albums by bands such as Spear of Longinus, Der Stürmer, Grom, Pantheon, Graveland, Thor's Hammer and Arghoslent.

Just a few months after the release of *Kosherat*, the body of "Grimnir" Mills was found dead. There was talk of suicide and drug overdose, although there are still many unanswered questions and mysterious circumstances. His untimely death would stall the band for a long time, but a few years later we find Grand Belial's Key reassembled with a new line-up ready to cross the Atlantic to perform a series of gigs around Europe, on the strength of a split album with two of the main names in the National Socialist black metal scene: Absurd and Sigbrlot.



Warhead Von Jewgrinder (born Brian James Moudry), was among the very first preachers of the NSBM scene in the U.S. territory. He made his mark on the scene thanks to his multiple activities in the political-religious field and for having founded Xenophobia in 1996 - a band with only one album: *Reclaiming Celtic Glory*, released ten years after its birth.

Born in Chicago in December 1976, Moudry has been involved in the neo-Nazi scene since his adolescence, developing an interest in racist metal as early as the first half



of the Nineties. In 1995 he founded the first publication entirely devoted to the scene and the cause of NSBM: *Hatemonger Warzine*. Forty pages of raw, black and white photocopies filled with articles, interviews and insights, overflowing with swastikas, racial invectives and assorted racist propaganda. Opening with a primitive editorial, Moudry offered up some pretty clear ideas, without mincing his words:



Reverend Brian J. Moudry (left) during a demonstration

*«Nazi black metal is not a trend... it is the future! The spirit of the holy hakenkruise will never die! [...] black metal is the music of the master race, only by and for those of true European bloodlines. Not for Jews and niggers, or hippie liberal homosexuals»<sup>30</sup>.*

Five issues of *Hatemonger* were published in the course of a decade. Like its European sister (the Greek 'zine *Wallachian Tyrant*, another fundamental point of reference for the NSBM scene), Moudry's 'zine featured all the prominent names of a quickly emerging scene: *Spear of Longinus*, *Funeral* (later *Kristallnacht*), *Der Stürmer*, *Graveland*, *Grand Belial's Key*, *Pantheon*, *Arghoslent*, and *Absurd*, and also included a large number of articles on the condition of white dissidents in America, the prison system, political rallies and the colorful activities of militants.

Many of the bands mentioned in *Hatemonger* did not stand the test of time, and even then, one could sense the posers who had carelessly begun to mix music and extreme politics. This sparked Moudry to wonder how genuine their choices really were:

*«I'm not certain on this, I fear some of it may be "trendy" in some cases. Some of these bands change their views after gaining some "popularity" or harassment... depending on the situation [...]. When I started doing *Hatemonger Warzine* in 95/96, there was only a handful of bands openly supportive or promoting the racist cause, and some only in interviews, not in their lyrics»<sup>31</sup>.*

The print run never exceeded more than 300 copies per issue, but the impact of the fanzine would leave indelible marks on the small, but already fierce NSBM scene. In issue after issue, *Hatemonger* acquired increasing confidence, becoming more clean-cut





*The cover of the first issue of Hatemonger zine (1996)*

with layout and graphics, but no less violent and maximalist in its opinions. Even a cursory glance will reveal that part of each issue is devoted to the World Church of the Creator (now commonly known as the Creativity Movement), the same doctrinal source from which Burdi learned his first racist lessons. Moudry will quickly move up the hierarchy of the organization from 2002 on, graduating from being a simple adept to becoming a Reverend, taking a leadership position in the State of Illinois.

Besides black metal, Moudry's musical career was balanced over the years among other projects leaning

towards hatecore, such as White Minority and the disturbing Flammable Hebrews, thanks to which he trod the stages of events such as the Ian Stuart Memorial organized by the American chapter of the Blood & Honour skinhead network, and the gathering of the Imperial Klans of America in Kentucky. But his main musical reference point remains Xenophobia. Their cassette outputs, two demos titled *Boot Stomping*, *Church Burning*, *Black Metal* (1996) and *Vomit on the Rabbi* (2004) respectively, are examples of hardly edifying black metal: rough, dirty, primitive and not very incisive. Even Moudry himself does not go easy on his first experiments in music, and it is the release of the full-length *Reclaiming Celtic Glory* that marks a decisive and important step forward; Xenophobia's first album enjoys technical and musical contributions from Veil's frontman, Stolzträger, who leads another ensemble that is also part of the Pagan Front.

«I first met Brian (founder of Xenophobia) shortly after the *Dolor* tape was released. He was familiar with my band from the tape, and I expressed some interest in his band and we began discussing some ideas. I offered to help out with guitars for Xenophobia. From there we began collaborating on some song ideas I had, and eventually recorded the *Reclaiming Celtic Glory* album. After this we played 2 successful live shows as well (one with *Absurd*, the other with *West Wall*). Looking back, I'm still rather fond of this material. I think it was a great collaboration and it's great having been a part of the most notorious black metal band in North America. You would have a hard time finding someone more dedicated to the scene than Brian»<sup>32</sup>.

Veil deserve a little digression: their only album titled *Sombre* (2008) offers, like the debut demo *Dolor* (2004), a mixture of depressive black metal characterized by long suites steeped in mysticism and melancholy. Stolzträger's music conveys feelings of anxiety and detachment, offering a curious oasis of isolation from the typical NSBM congregation, which represents the majority of his fans. We could say that Veil are a singularity, for the way they managed to alienate themselves from the matrix of the movement to which they belong (an affiliation claimed with pride).

Turning back to Xenophobia, we find the five tracks that make up their only album are a concentration of racial intolerance and anti-Semitism without any qualms. The album, despite the sophisticated references to the original homeland that lies on the other side of the Atlantic, fails to break free from the burden of an identity undermined by Americanism: in spite of the artwork, with ancestral images and photos of untouched natural landscapes, the martial, pseudo-chivalric message of *Reclaiming Celtic Glory* clashes with a constant background theme of merciless "metropolitan racial war".

Songs like *Silent Brotherhood* emerge from this unalterable DNA, dedicated to the eponymous white nationalist revolutionary organization founded in the early Eighties by Robert Jay Mathews. Everything seems

to be reflected upon, in an excessively intrusive manner, demonstrating the creationist racial obsession of a follower of Klassen's church who finds himself forced to live in a typical small, multi-ethnic American town like Joliet, Illinois, Moudry's actual



The cover of the only full-length by Xenophobia,  
*Reclaiming Celtic Glory* (2006)

home. It is no coincidence that Xenophobia's album is dedicated to "Gonzo", Moudry's "brother" jailed for murder in the first degree «...while defending himself against nigger lovers»<sup>33</sup>.

Therefore, it should not be surprising that in over fifteen years of activity, Moudry's band have not produced more than one full-length, and that for several years Hatemonger Warzine has not been published beyond the fifth issue.

*«Hatemonger has not been released since about 2006/07, our computer was taken the second time my house was raided by police/feds [...]. Racists are treated as outcasts or criminals where I live, in the liberal North. I've lost a lot of family, so-called friends, and freedoms as a result of this»<sup>34</sup>.*

But Moudry's problem with authorities seems to have begun well before acquiring any racial consciousness, if it is true that he was locked in four different juvenile detention centers between the ages of thirteen and eighteen.

*«In some cases the Juvenile prisons are worse than the adult ones, because the adult prisoners tend to mind their own business more... the juveniles have to prove to everyone how tough they are. I have seen stabbings, beatings, and rapes...»<sup>35</sup>.*



*Xenophobia's promo picture for the compilation on  
Satanic Skinhead Propaganda titled  
Declaration of Anti-Semetic Terror (2006)*

The chronicles of some legal issues that involved the leader of Xenophobia found space in the editorials of Hatemonger, or were described during the few interviews given by Moudry. In a recent one, given to an underground Italian 'zine in November 2010, Jewgrinder hoped to be able to soon release various material involving other musicians, besides a new, wide-ranging album. He also stated that he was on trial again for using an illegal weapon, not to mention a charge of aggravated assault against a police officer.

But his matters with the law took an even more dramatically serious turn: on May 30, 2012 the Feds raided his home in

Joliet putting him under arrest on charges of trying to kill an entire family of African Americans by burning down their house. The nth legal case for which the leader of Xenophobia was taken to trial with an accusation that could cost him something like forty years in prison.



Another American band of proven NSBM faith - whose leader, Rubeus XIII, seems destined to the same judicial fate as Brian Moudry - are Pantheon, a name that has caused many misunderstandings within the metal scene over the years, considering the amount of bands with the same moniker scattered throughout the globe<sup>36</sup>. The Pantheon that we are interested in, can be distinguished from the rest of the metal bands because of their specific geographic location, the city of Tucson, in dusty Arizona.

*«The music Pantheon makes is for a select group of people interested in our ideology. If you feel that we've somehow reached out to you in our prideful hymns we play, then we firmly welcome you aboard. You are now part of the many that understand what we are ranting and raving about. [...] The sound of Pantheon's music and lyrics emphasize what could or should happen to those standing in the way of what we love the most. [...] the ideals and values within National Socialism. Therefore, Pantheon is and always shall be a part of the greater NSBM scene represented here»<sup>37</sup>.*

Just like Xenophobia and Veil, they are members of the Pagan Front, and they have a substantial discography behind them, marked by albums that waver both in terms of thematic intent and technique. For example, listening to one of their first albums, *Vargrstrike*, we are faced with altogether unremarkable black metal, further undermined by poor symphonic inserts. Oddly, it is a reissue of that same album (from Germany's Resistance Records to Darker Than Black) that shows us the most convincing side of the band, thanks to tracks taken from the demo *Thangorodrim* (1997) and included as a bonus - the only exception being the last song, *Enterer of the Threshold*, where the embarrassment of lo-fi keyboards adds to



a tirelessly and emphatically repeated "Sieg Heil!", in similar fashion to an unlikely mantra.

The last albums, beginning with *Paganuclear* (2009), started to veer dangerously close to Nazi-inspired sci-fi shores, including songs with both high-sounding and absurd titles such as *Atomic Feuerstürms Over Vinland - Paganuclear Ellipses* or *Intergalactic Führer - Hail the Almighty Cosmic Slayer*, which offer a good idea of the route undertaken. To sum it all up, we find apocalyptic/nuclear quotes by Savitri Devi that close the circle. It must be said though, that even back then Rubeus XIII (who now calls himself Rubeus "Skypastor") did not hide the eccentricity of some of his choices:

*«This will be a rather destructive yet alien (out of the ordinary in the extraterrestrial sense) like force to be reckoned with. Some will be confused as to whether this is W.O.T.A.N. (Will of the Aryan Nation) or W.O.T.A.N (Will of the Alien Nation). Ha ha»<sup>38</sup>.*

The album *Führersland*, released in January 2011, follows the same direction. Oppressing and grey, post-nuclear scenarios host the digressions of six tracks/tirades that are nothing but the evocation of a longed-for clean-up by means of a nuclear fallout, a much needed purification through fire that occurs via songs like *Raped by the Sub-Atomic Bastard*, *Burns Like a Megaton Bitch* or *A Wasteland Sieged by Furiously Barbaric Renegades-Wolven Domain*. Basically, an album that stands between *The Day After* and *Mad Max*, but where the band never forgets (starting from the title) its Nazi and anti-Semitic origins.

*«Pantheon in no way condones the use of nuclear weapons nor the destruction of our glorious race, but employs the idea of nuclear warfare as a symbol for the total destruction of current attitudes. [...] This "slogan" is a symbol of the destruction of society's present, Jewish way of life. We spit on the Talmud and all the plans of the Jews to destroy the white race»<sup>39</sup>.*

Much more explicit and violently primitive is the other National Socialist music project that involves Rubeus XIII, the notorious Gestapo SS. They have only released one album, *Vinlandic Stormtroopers* (2002), which is actually nothing but a retrospective, collecting fourteen songs previously released on demo and disregarded collaborations. They are a markedly RAC band that gradually moved towards extremely basic and rudimentary black metal, but because of the extreme moniker, and excessive propaganda of the tracks (*Fist of the Zogrusher*, *Juden Raus*, *Aryan Superman*, etc..), this CD is still sought after and auctioned at prices that clearly fall outside the objective quality of the product in purely musical terms. Regarding Pantheon's activities, the fanzine *Common Reich* deserves to be mentioned: strictly NSBM and noteworthy for providing a sampler dedicated to the genre - a tape that was distributed with the first issue contains songs by Absurd, Godless North, Gontyna Kry, Thunderbolt and other projects in which the seemingly tireless Rubeus is involved: Katharia and Blutkrieg.

*«NSBM is a way of life not just a game or Internet fan club. If you're going to claim "NS" prepare to be involved»<sup>40</sup>.*

Looking back at the problems with the law "affecting" several members of the American National Socialist black metal scene, we find that even Rubeus XIII had his troubles. Taking advantage of the space he was offered in the third issue of *Hatemonger*, the leader of Pantheon wrote a long article about the various misadventures caused by the possession of a sawed-off shotgun, which was found in his car by the police. According to the musician's version, the events took place in Arizona in the summer of 2003,



when Rubeus XIII, in the company of his twelve year old nephew, offered a ride to a friend after a barbecue night with some old local comrades. The friend seemed to be in a strange state of agitation and insisted on carrying around a gun with the barrel illegally shortened. The guy's idea - clearly fueled by the fumes of alcohol - was to take a ride in the car and *«shoot some niggers...»<sup>41</sup>*. Rubeus, trying to settle the guy's overexcited mood, decided to offer him a ride, as long as he steered clear of trouble. However, despite the driver's precautions, a patrol stopped the vehicle and the list of charges became extensive after a quick search. Besides a (stolen) rifle with the barrel nearly five inches shorter than what is allowed by the State of Arizona, the police seized a baseball bat (apparently also owned by the problematic comrade) decorated with swastikas and the words "nigger-beater", open beer cans - Arizona law prohibits alcohol consumption inside a car - a short sword, a set of knives and a lumberjack axe. More than enough evidence for the authorities to detain the leader of Pantheon, who also had previous charges for illegal possession of firearms.

*«[...] they made it seem in their report that I was a psychopathic grisly skinhead murderer out to bash niggers and blow their heads off with a sawed-off shotgun as well»<sup>42</sup>.*

Rubeus XIII's problems were certainly not mitigated by his arrest, but despite the disastrous chain of events that followed the detention and police investigations, the words that close the report show all the hatred of someone who has nothing more to lose.

*«To all the cretins that actually thought that they could bring me down, you were sadly mistaken and should realize this now. I am well over these situations and obstacles which have been intentionally placed upon my path and I am only that much stronger with each time I am crossed with them. Meine Ehre heißt Treue!!! My will is of iron and steel!!! Only the Strong Survive!!! RaHoWa!!!»<sup>43</sup>.*



Moving to the East Coast, specifically to Pennsylvania, we meet another band that joined the Pagan Front and redefined its own standards, significantly shifting towards pagan metal in the course of a decade. They are Wotanorden, a duo (Jorgen and Tyranath, the latter being responsible for an eponymous NSBM side-project) that emerged from the ashes of Nineties death metal, who at that time called itself Farkaskoldus.

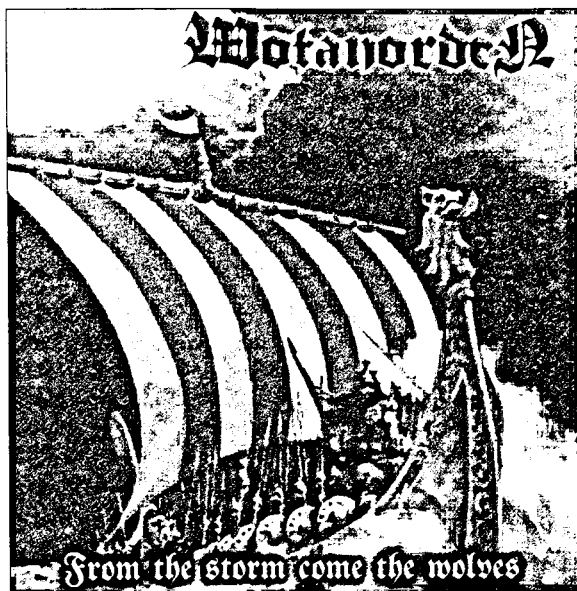
The debut (*From the Storm Come the Wolves*, 2003) embraces Odinist paganism and Germanic-Scandinavian mythology, a process that will be carried on in the two following albums (*Aryan Culture Preservation* and *The Hands of Fate*, released in 2006 and 2011 respectively). But because of the radically identitarian approach and the explicit ideological adherence to a certain area, the band found themselves circumscribed within the NSBM frame, a categorization that definitely does not suit them:

*«Due to our Right-wing ideals and a few songs with National Socialist themes, Wotanorden has been labeled as "NSBM", do I agree with this labeling of our music? No I do not, our band has been Wotanist (Germanic Heathen) since our very beginnings, to be categorized simply as NSBM is shallow and not giving our music the certain respect it deserves! We started as a black metal band in our early times, but if I was to describe our music now it would be under the category of "Heathen Metal". Indeed we are members of the Pagan Front, and yes we were under an NS label. Is our music geared and written for Aryan folk of European descent? MOST CERTAINLY, for I sing of legends, tales of our gods and heroes of our folk that fought with strength defying unspeakable odds. I do believe that our native European religions are our birthright, part of our ancient Aryan blood and spirit! Racial and cultural preservation has existed thousands of years before the Third Reich was even thought of! [...] I am an avid believer in racial segregation; does that make me an "evil racist"? Of course not, it just makes me a radical traditionalist and a realist! Our music is aimed to spark the ancient flame once again into the heart of our people, to awaken their Aryan spirit [...]»<sup>44</sup>.*

It is not easy to draw a dividing line between völkisch-pagan metal, devoted to both romantic and evocative Nordic folklore, but at the same time freed from ideological claims, and those instances of an NSBM nature, revised and corrected by a greater interest in the spiritual field. As we have seen, the boundary usually proves permeable on both sides, and for those who want to try and raise a partition, the best solution is



often to form more bands, each with a dominant thematic approach. More simply, bands can choose a personal path without regard to the labels which, like it or not, they will be subjected to. In the case of Wotanorden, however, it is not a matter of wanting to keep their distance from NSBM because it can somehow damage their image. Jorgen and Tyrannath do not hide their political stance, but at the same time they yearn for recognition of their music in what they consider its proper context, which cannot be NSBM in their view, as this label is perceived as a designation of limited size where it is too difficult to coexist with bands that have a vastly different approach from one another.



This is a situation quite similar to that of other bands that have undergone a resolute transition over the years, from National Socialist extreme metal to a more sophisticated Nordic paganism. In this sense, we can take the words of Vjohrrnt V. Wodansson of the Canadian ensemble Fjörd as an example, a band that is very similar to Wotanorden:

*«We are aware of ZOG's schemes and its techniques and do not abide by their agenda. We're also not 16 years old kids, at almost 40 each, we know very well where we are, what and why we think and believe what we believe. Fjörd is not afraid to say what we think and I believe it is clear in our lyrics without being vulgar nonetheless. You won't find any "Sieg Heil" or "White power" in our songs to tell you that we are promoting white European heritage and blood. We are not NS men yet we are Right-winged in principles as it is natural for traditional heathen men to be. I have seen in some places on the net that Fjörd was tagged NS, and even NSBM. That is ridiculous. We are not BM and we are not NS. [...] I understand the links between heathenism and National Socialism, but there are limits beyond which both do not merge»<sup>45</sup>.*

Fjörd's desire to stand apart might seem useless if not hypocritical to many, but once again highlights the many facets within this extreme music scene, which is too often seen as one and indivisible, while in truth, it is largely based on fragile ideological distinctions and temporary alliances. Vjohrrnt's words offer further criticism towards the NSBM scene as it stands today, with some distinctions:



*«How many actual good quality NSBM bands are there really? And how many useless "Hitler is so cool" kiddie bands are there tarnishing the genre? The elite bands that started early with serious concepts and are still here with dedication to the cause like Der Stürmer and Capricornus (RIP) are not counted by the hundreds. [...] There are so many other ways to promote Aryanism and heathenism without using such clichés. MySpace two chords "Sieg Heil" bands won't contribute to our struggle. They just saturate the genre and fill up distro lists with cult limited to 88 copies demos. What we need is great bands like Graveland, Nokturnal Mortum and Wotanorden which promote heathen values with the pro-Aryan edge ad more politically oriented bands like previously mentioned Der Stürmer and Capricornus for example. Bands which put out quality material with good imagery and intelligent lyrics»<sup>46</sup>.*

At the end of this overview of the NSBM phenomenon in North America, the awareness of an extremely unorthodox reality emerges. The bands specifically devoted to the cause of National Socialist black metal are not as numerous as one might believe. However, the cauldron containing all the claims that can bring bands together, although they seem rather different from one another, is rather large. Elements such as racism, paganism (sometimes Luciferian) and anti-Semitism act as a binding agent, as they are the starting point from which some projects choose to develop a very personal style. In most cases, the Third Reich occupies a marginal place: the figure of Hitler becomes more a gimmick than a true instrumental icon, or object of worship and veneration, as we have seen elsewhere. The United States have instead developed a version of NSBM that is deeply marked by persistent racial conflicts that cross, with alternate peaks and valleys, the large cities that fill its territory. With rare exceptions, the bulk of the American scene carries on a struggle for racial supremacy that is not inclined to further the progress of National Socialist thought, and it does not suffer from the anxiety of being associated with the picture of a revived far Right movement because of this.

## Notes:

- 1 - G. Burdi, from *The Black Flame* n.1-2, 1997.
- 2 - Ibid.
- 3 - *George Burdi, to Hell and Back*, from *Punk Planet* n.48, March/April 2002.
- 4 - Ibid.
- 5 - Ibid.
- 6 - To understand the relevance of a record like *Cult of the Holy War*, just think that in spite of Burdi's "betrayal", it is still available in the catalog of Resistance Records, and its sales are so flattering, even more than fifteen years after its first release, that it is a perennial bestseller in the white power scene. Not by chance *Cult of the Holy War* is also one of the rare albums that Resistance Records has produced in a special and limited edition on multicolor vinyl for collectors. *Declaration of War* is a completely different story, Burdi renounced it to the point that he decided to consign it to oblivion as soon as the first print run was sold out. When he sold the entire company to William Pierce's National Alliance, Burdi explicitly requested a binding agreement that the new owners would exclude *Declaration of War* from Resistance Records' catalog, cautioning them not to print any kind of future reissues.
- 7 - G. Burdi, September 28 1999, Windsor courthouse (Canada).
- 8 - See for example the song *A Clown Named Burdi*, from the Insurgents' album *Dumb and Dumber*, 2006: «*You have chosen a different direction / You had a sudden change in mind / Not a man... of integrity / But a coward is what we do find*».
- 9 - *An Interview with the Publisher*, William L. Pierce, from *Resistance* n.11, spring 2000.
- 10 - *Is Black Metal a White Noise?*, Möbus H., from *Resistance* n.11, spring 2000.
- 11 - J. Murdoch, *The American Scene - A Brief Overview*, from *International Skinhead Bulletin* n.6, May 2001.
- 12 - *Letters to the Editor*, from *Resistance* n.12, summer 2000.
- 13 - «...the most hopelessly regressive elements of the black metal scene are gathered together with the second issue of *The Seventh Scroll magazine*» from *New Music Monthly* n.61, September 1998.
- 14 - Gorruth, from *Dark Blaze/Into the Pentagon* n.1, 2001.
- 15 - *Before God*, from *Rock Against Communism* n.7, summer/autumn 2001.
- 16 - When asked about what kind of concepts West Wall want to convey through their first work, the guitarist replied: «*Actually, the album is not a political album in any way. Its basically a theme of war from the perspective of a grenadier. I would say its a historical album, just meant to show the hardness of battle, of its heroes and its victims*». from *Blood & Honour Central* ([www.bloodandhonourcentral.co.uk](http://www.bloodandhonourcentral.co.uk)).
- 17 - Grom, *Pagan Drums of War*, from *Resistance* n.18, spring 2002.
- 18 - In the complex map of American identitarian organizations, the position of the Volksfront can be summed up by a few points of their ideological agenda, published on their official website ([www.volksfrontinternational.com](http://www.volksfrontinternational.com)). Basically, the movement places emphasis on the respect for all peoples and all races, as opposed to a

## AMERICAN WIDERSTAND

forced and leveling globalization. Despite these caveats, combined with an explicit rejection of all forms of totalitarianism, such statements have not prevented the band from ending up in the infamous list of *Hate Groups* compiled by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

19 - Fanisk, *A Light Unto the Folk*, from *Resistance* n.25, winter 2005/2006.

20 - «*The philosophical ideas expressed in the work of Eldrig are of a very complex and personal nature, and are not connected to any movement or political ideology*». Eldrig, Statement of Ideological Independence, from the band's official MySpace ([www.myspace.com/eldrig/](http://www.myspace.com/eldrig/)).

21 - It may seem a risky choice to refer to two figures that are seemingly so far apart, however it is a known fact that there was actually a friendship between Jung and Serrano. Jung's formulations on the collective unconscious also had a particularly important role in the development of Serrano's theories.

22 - Arghoslent, from *Hatemonger* n.3, December 2003.

23 - It is the boundary line created during the second half of the Eighteenth century in order to appease the disputes between Pennsylvania and Maryland. In spite of mere topographical issues, the Mason-Dixon line mainly concerns the idea of a path demarcating the slave States of the South from the abolitionist ones of the North. Even today, the symbolic value of this frontier divides the American nation between these two realities and ways of understanding the country.

24 - Arghoslent, from *The Left Hand Path* ([www.thelefthandpath.com](http://www.thelefthandpath.com)), 2008.

25 - Grand Belial's Key, from *Supreme Brutality* ([www.supremebrutality.net](http://www.supremebrutality.net)), 2006.

26 - Ibid.

27 - Grand Belial's Key, from *Supreme Brutality* ([www.supremebrutality.net](http://www.supremebrutality.net)), 2006.

28 - Ibid.

29 - In accordance with their provocative and prevaricating attitude, Grand Belial's Key also covered totally unexpected songs, such as *I Kill Everything I Fuck* by the icon of antisocial American punk GG Allin (1956-1993). The song closes the limited edition on vinyl of *Judeobest Assassination*.

30 - B. Moudry, from *Hatemonger* n.1, 1996

31 - B. Moudry, from *Rock-Metal Bands Webzine* ([www.rockmetalbands.com](http://www.rockmetalbands.com)), 2005.

32 - Veil, interview with the authors, February 2012.

33 - As specified in the liner notes of the CD booklet.

34 - B. Moudry, from *Satan's Sadists* n.88, September 2010/January 2011.

35 - B. Moudry, from *Rock-Metal Bands Webzine* ([www.rockmetalbands.com](http://www.rockmetalbands.com)), 2005.

36 - There are at least a dozen between Austria, Sweden, Russia, Poland, and the United Kingdom. And remaining within the United States, among the many bands plagued by this case of rampant homonymy we also find a Californian ensemble that, after signing the coveted contract with a major label, has suddenly changed its name to Sanctus, cutting all ties with every possible association with the NSBM scene.

37 - Pantheon, from the biography published on the band's official website ([www.thepaganfront.com/pantheon](http://www.thepaganfront.com/pantheon)).

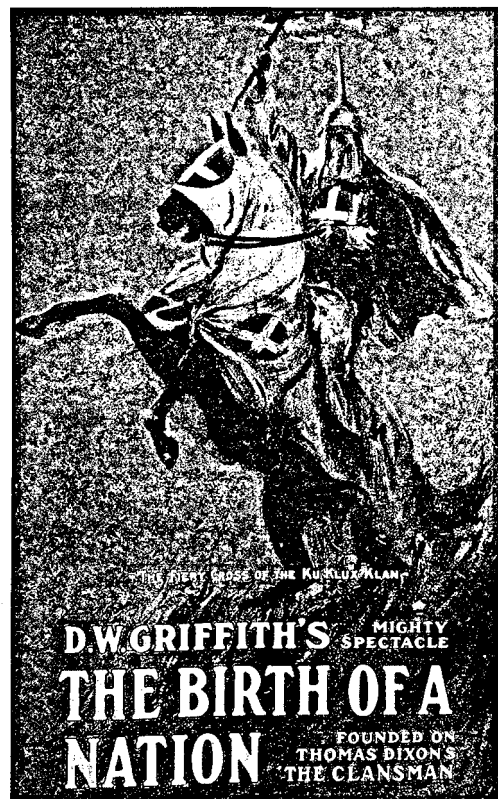
- 38 - Pantheon, from Breidablik ([www.breidablik-zine.narod.ru](http://www.breidablik-zine.narod.ru)), 2009.
- 39 - Pantheon, from Resistance n.15, spring 2001.
- 40 - Pantheon, from the biography published on the band's official website ([www.thepaganfront.com/pantheon](http://www.thepaganfront.com/pantheon)).
- 41 - Pantheon, from Hatemonger n.3, December 2003.
- 42 - Ibid.
- 43 - Ibid.
- 44 - Wotanorden, from Defiance n.2, September 2011.
- 45 - Fjörd, from Der Wehrwolf n.2, 2010.
- 46 - Ibid.

# White supremacy in America

«WOTAN ON THE OTHER HAND IS THE EXCLUSIVE GOD OF THE ARYAN FOLK. HE IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE "WILL OF THE ARYAN NATION", AN ARCHETYPE, A REPOSITORY OF WISDOM AND AN ANCESTOR, DEEPLY INGRAINED WITHIN OUR GENETIC MEMORY»<sup>1</sup>

[DAVID LANE]

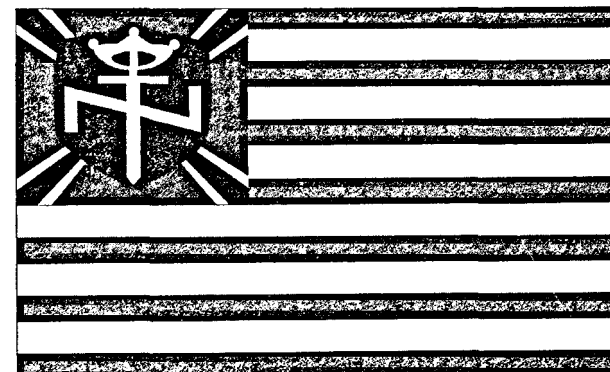
In the colorful world of American dissidence, the most disparate beliefs coexist, organically distributed in movements that emerged throughout the past century. A perfect example being the strong Protestant roots of the Ku Klux Klan, which was founded for the first time in 1865 by some veterans of the Confederate



Army and then dissolved just ten years later. The Klan rose again from its ashes in 1915, and at the time of its greatest splendor it counted a few million acolytes - thanks in part to some external factors, including the resounding success of the film *Birth of a Nation* by David Griffith (1875 - 1948), based on the novel *The Clansman* by Thomas Dixon Jr. (1864 - 1946) which idolized the Klan and its role in the reconstruction of post civil war America - and promoted white nationalism and fierce conservatism imbued with an anti-Communist and anti-immigration spirit. Burning crosses and hooded knights terrorized the nights of the minorities in the late Twenties, after which a slow decline brought the KKK to an almost negligible level, were it not for some autonomous groups that carried on a systematic strategy of terror until the Forties. Today, there is a

so-called third incarnation of the Klan, created to counter the progress of the movement for the civil rights of African Americans, but its appeal is not even remotely comparable to the past.

The post-war years have seen a multitude of thriving organizations that rested on similar foundations, offering white pride advocates an eclectic range of options. Among the most important ones, the Aryan Nations should be mentioned. Built in the Seventies under the leadership of former aerospace engineer Richard Butler (1918 - 2004), it was for years, one of the most widespread incarnations of a newborn racist Christianity, otherwise known as Christian Identity, which is based on a different interpretation of the biblical stories, believing that the European white peoples are the real descendants of Israel, whereas the Jews are a demonic progeny.



Aryan Nations' flag

Set on a very different foundation, we find the Church of the Creator - today called the Creativity Movement - founded by Ben Klassen (1918 - 1993). *Nature's Eternal Religion*, the pivotal book of this new creed, was published in 1973 and consists of two main volumes in which Klassen summarizes some precepts around which



Ben Klassen, author of *Nature's Eternal Religion* (1973)

the thought of the brotherhood revolves: the rejection of any divine or supernatural influence (replaced by a strict interpretation of natural laws), a vision of Christianity as a weak religion that teaches us to love one's enemy rather than to hate him, the belief that the white race is the pinnacle of the evolution of the species - and responsible for every progress of the human race - as opposed to other inferior ethnic groups. These are just some of the programmatic points that constitute the theoretical cornerstone of Creativity, complementary elements of a mechanistic philosophy that has made a clean sweep of the spiritual component, replacing it with a single principle to blindly follow: «We believe that our race is our religion»<sup>2</sup>.

Outside of a specifically fideistic context there are (or there were) many more overtly political groups such as the American Nazi Party, the White Aryan Resistance or the National Alliance, guided by George Lincoln Rockwell, Tom Metzger and William Luther Pierce respectively, three key characters who orchestrated the widespread use of white supremacism in the United States.

From such a rigid mesh of organizations, so hierarchically structured and with well-defined ideology, a loose cannon can sometimes escape, and in at least one case, has gone to extremes that were indigestible for even the most experienced veterans in the fight against the system. This uncontrollable variable goes by the name of James Mason, who was active in the ranks of the American Nazi Party from an early age. Disappointed by the unsuccessful mass strategies carried out by the neo-Nazi groups of that time, he gradually became more



*The symbol of the Creativity Movement, the "W" stands for "White Race"*

and more intolerant towards the petty-bourgeois party hierarchies in which he was entangled, and decided to resort to violence by joining terrorist groups such as the National Socialist Liberation Front of Joseph Tommasi. He soon took over the bulletin of this faction, with the programmatic name of *Siege*, which gradually evolved from a simple info sheet of the NSLF to a compendium of Mason's revolutionary ideas. His vision was increasingly distant from petty politics and his fundamentalism had already cost him several visits to state prisons. Next to a black-tinted extremism, in which Nazism, LaVeyan Satanism, terrorism and conspiracy theories come



*George Lincoln Rockwell (right) during the Nation of Islam meeting held in Washington in 1962*

together in a unique and unusual intransigence, Mason abandoned the traditional guidelines of National Socialism to get closer to the ideas of Charles Manson (for whom he had already shown appreciation in the past), whom he elevated to cult status, to be worshipped on par with Hitler.



*James Mason at work in his studio (1983)*

*«There is a great leader/philosopher in our midst, alive and involved today, as he has been for over eighteen years, with a name and a reputation world-renowned and a following of his own—loose as it may be, at least equal in number, if not greater than that of the combined groups comprising the traditional radical Right. His actions have been mightier, his ideas loftier, his eloquence greater, his philosophy superior and his impact ten thousand times that of anything the movement can offer as its closest runner-up [...] He is aware of all this himself and is in total humility about it, just as was Hitler [...] He knows he can't be threatened or rivaled by anyone. He is secure. He only wants to see it all put successfully forward by whomever and by whatever means are at hand. Hitler did no differently. He is Charles Manson»<sup>1</sup>.*

The Universal Order was born in 1982 (its name and logo, a swastika superimposed on the scale of justice, were suggested by Manson), and was not meant to be an actual political entity, but more of revolutionary laboratory in which various scenarios for the future of the white race were suggested, along with the consequent actions to preserve it. In the background stood an unavoidable apocalyptic vision that foreshadowed the imminent collapse of the system, on whose rubble a new breed would have to rebuild a racially intact society. *Siege*.



contained some of the most irrational and maximalist formulations conceived within the milieu of the American Right, so it is no surprise that its publication was discontinued and its contents remain a mere philosophical speculation.

More pragmatic were the numerous brotherhoods related to the skinhead scene or directly connected to Blood & Honour, which drew more prosaically on a diverse wealth of ideological clichés typical of the extreme Right, without racking their brains about social or spiritual speculations. As one can imagine, many of these organizations were divided - at least on paper - by irreconcilable differences, which they occasionally tended to smooth out by closing ranks around an essential common ground. This is how the Christian matrix that is the core of some movements can coexist with the pagan bent of other groups that have gained ground in recent times: a practical example of this unusual combination is to be found in the short history of the Brüder Schweigen, which gathered defectors of the Aryan Nations and committed Odinists.

It is even more interesting to note how many symbolic characters of white pride have embarked on a journey that took them through seemingly drastic changes. One symbolic name is that of David Lane (1938 - 2007), foster son of a Lutheran pastor, later active within the Aryan Nations and the Ku Klux Klan and finally a member of the cult of Wotan, of which he proved to be the most influential promulgator, at least in recent years.

Separatists, supremacists, experts of racial paganism or a revised Christianity that will no longer turn the other cheek: everything contributes to fuel a seething anti-system scenario that is in permanent evolution, and is able to morph itself to intercept the changes that are taking place. Most of these entities experienced an inevitable decline, usually coinciding with the departure of a charismatic leader, thus leaving room for new political/religious currents.

A strategic impulse aimed at a turnover that was not only generational, but also conceptual, came from the pagan revival that has taken place overseas. In his seminal essay *Gods of the Blood - The Pagan Revival and White Separatism* (2003), Mattias Gardell stressed that for some time now, there has been an ongoing process of radicalization within the extreme Right, and the transition from the old Christian mythology to a new pagan/racial worship can be seen as an indicator. While the reassertion of ancestral cults watered down by a consumer-oriented New Age spirituality is not a concern, the reemerging of a pre-Christian mythology, on the other hand, has provided these new guardians of racial purity with an organic cultural background seen as a direct legacy of the European ancestors, and therefore dispossessed of the influence of their historical enemy - Judeo-Christianity. The Nordic myth thus appears to be the most obvious landing place in the evolution of the Aryan cult, proposing a series of basic archetypes that are well suited to the world view of the typical white dissident - in particular that of the warrior-hero consecrated to defending the honor, the people and the native soil.

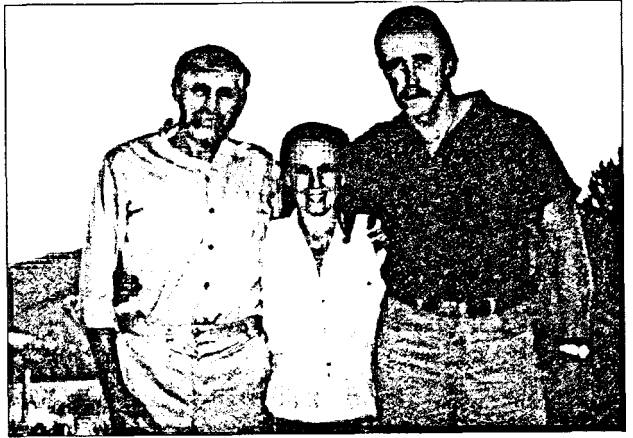
This new scenario has seen the compelling evolution of David Lane's Wotansvolk, later assisted in his work of propaganda by his wife Katja Lane and Ron McVan, a former follower of the Creativity Movement. The name of David Lane came to the fore after the fall of the The Order: the series of arrests that followed the dismantling of

the subversive group left him with a sentence of 190 years in prison, during which he immersed himself in reading, delving into studies of history, religion, philosophy and Odinism, finally gaining a racial conception of the ancient Nordic cult as the hub of a new spiritual dimension of the white race. In this context, Lane came to the formulation of the famous "14 Words", about which we have already spoken on several occasions, the synthesis of a white utopia that can only take place at the cost of a war without compromise, which according to the author, can be faced with the creation of two separate tools for fighting: a body of propaganda that acts openly, devoted to the education of the people and the promotion of racial ideals, and an armed branch baptized WOTAN (acronym for Will of the Aryan Nation), for attacking the system through terrorist actions carried out by small autonomous cells.

Lane was also a prolific author, having written several texts that revolve around his project of restoration of white society through a rigid logic of racial segregation. Among his best known writings, we should mention the pamphlet *88 Precepts*, a set of rules for the process of preservation of the white population and a sort of compendium to what has already



*Illustration by Ron McVan for the book Temple of Wotan (2000)*

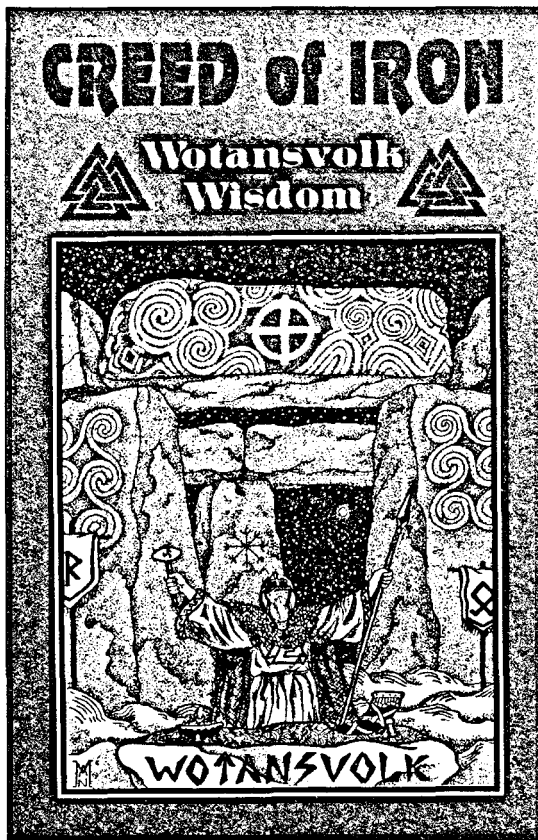


*Wotansvolk's troika. From left to right: David Lane, Katja Lane and Ron McVan*

been expressed in the "14 Words". In the 88 precepts, Lane does not dwell on the esoteric or mystical aspect of Wotanism, but rather outlines a series of doctrinal presuppositions closely oriented to a specific biological racism.

Two other associates of David Lane have contributed in different but essential ways to the dissemination of the ideas of the Wotansvolk





(or Temple of Wotan, as it will also be known). His wife, Katja, played a central role in terms of logistics, managing all the communication aspects of a movement that found its leader behind bars (thanks to Lane's reputation, the Wotansvolk grew very quickly within prisons) and creating a website, a mailing list and the publishing house 14 Words Press. Ron McVan helped to give shape to this newborn worship, becoming responsible for the study and synthesis of the whole ritual aspect (largely neglected by Lane, who was more focused on the warrior and racial side), and the precise setting of the aesthetics of it all. His contribution is also evident in the illustrations accompanying the two fundamental texts of the Wotansvolk created by him, *Creed of Iron - Wotansvolk Wisdom* (1997) and *Temple of Wotan - Holy Book of the Aryan Tribes* (2000), real manuals in which ceremonies

and rites of passage are analyzed, laying out a complete and articulated liturgy of the worship.

The continual growth in popularity of these movements is reflected in extreme music, with NSBM and its derivatives acting as ideal sounding boards for those ideas that summarize the ideological substratum of the genre in an exemplary manner: a rejection of Christianity and the authority of the State, as well as the glorification of an atavistic paganism in line with the myth of "blood and soil", typical of that pagan milieu rediscovered during the years of National Socialism.

Therefore, while it is quite rare to find NSBM bands that adhere to the dogmas of Christian Identity, we do however, run into a minority that are aligned to the dictates of the Creativity Movement. The cult of Ben Klassen has followers on both sides of the ocean, like Aryanas from Canada, Evil Incarnate and Xenophobia from the U.S., and Antisemitex from Poland who, on the split album with their compatriots Othar titled *Death to Z.O.G.!!!/Deep Woods*, lavish in a blatant form of proselytism by inserting this phrase in the booklet: «Support the World Church of the Creator. White people awake! Join us!!!».

The response obtained by Wotansvolk is infinitely greater. An example being *Creed of Iron*, one of the most successful episodes in Graveland's discography, which openly pays homage to Ron McVan's tome. Even where there is not a full commitment to the principles of Wotanism, the thesis of its creator has taken root in virtually every area and there is not a National Socialist project that does not mention the "14 Words" in its lyrics, interviews, and flyers. It is a mantra from which it is impossible to escape. The number 14, almost inseparably followed by 88 (in homage to the 88 precepts, but also to the dual H of "Heil Hitler!"), is part of a declaration of racial faith balanced between old and new, as a demonstration of how David Lane's ideas have breached the iconography and cultural background of the extremist movements, turning him into the last hero of the so-called white resistance.

### Notes:

- 1 - From the introduction by David Lane to one of the fundamental books of the Wotansvolk, Ron McVan's work: *Creed of Iron - Wotansvolk Wisdom*, 14 Words Press, St. Maries 1997.
- 2 - First of the five fundamental principles of the Creativity, as stated on their official website ([www.creativitymovement.net](http://www.creativitymovement.net)).
- 3 - J. Mason, *Siege - The Collected Writings of James Mason*, Black Sun Publication, Bozeman 2003.

Interview with:

## Stolzträger

**B**etween 2011 and 2012 we had the opportunity to exchange a few words and impressions with Stolzträger, Veil's frontman and founder of Terrorwolfe Productions, who proved to be a kind and accessible person. Well aware of his role and the significance of his various activities, he managed to offer a vision of his way of interpreting black metal, not only as a music genre, but as an actual lifestyle.



*Stolzträger*

**First of all could you tell us something about your first steps into metal? What has attracted you to this kind of music? Is there a specific event that convinced you to become an active part of this scene?**

Like most people my age, my first experiences with metal were as an early teenager with the thrash and then subsequently death metal bands. Some of the very first bands I was obsessed with were Black Sabbath (original era), early Metallica, early Megadeth, Testament, etc. But it wasn't long before I was exposed to more underground and heavier bands like Death, Monstrosity, Sepultura, Sadus, and local legends from my area, Morbid Saint. Living in the Midwestern USA was somewhat limiting for extreme music in the early 90's. We always heard about the American bands first (Florida death

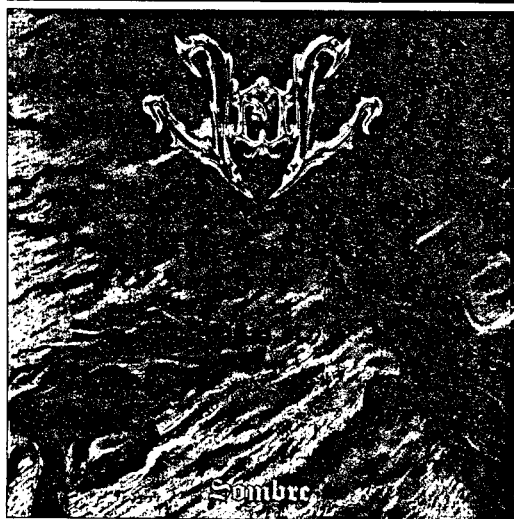
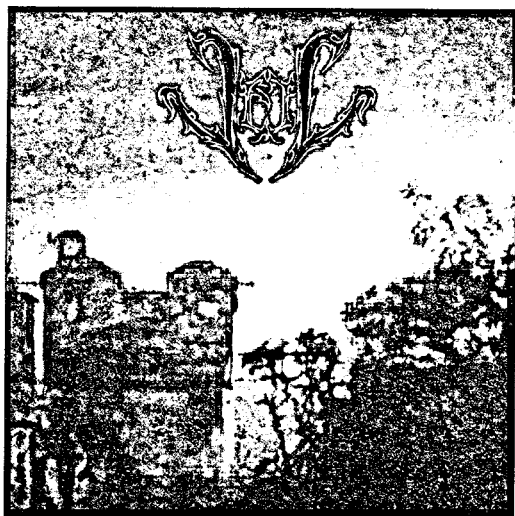
metal for example), and it wasn't until a bit later when the big European names like Entombed, Dismember, etc. became known to my circle of friends. Keep in mind there was no Internet at this time. And living in the secluded Midwest, there was no metal shop where we could go and buy current independent zines or find out about new releases. Often it was a case of one person somehow getting their hands on a zine when they

went to a big city, and this would be passed around and amongst friends with every word scrutinized looking for new band names, trustworthy mailorder distros, etc. Through this slow uncovering of extreme music, I eventually discovered black metal in the mid/late 90's, and it was like a revelation. In particular, Burzum, Graveland, and Thor's Hammer had a significant impact on me. Burzum was obviously like nothing I had ever heard, and was one of the first bands to truly capture the enthralling feeling that I believe is a central component of quality black metal. By this time I was also living closer to a city that had a punk & metal shop. This shop somehow had one lonely copy of Thor's Hammer *Fidelity Shall Triumph* which had been recently released on Darker Than Black Records. I know this is not considered amongst the earliest of Polish black metal releases, but this album in particular really opened me up to the obscure and atmospheric sounds of the Polish scene. From then on I was obsessed with black metal, and could confidently say "Yes, this is my music". I had been playing guitar since the early 90's as well, so it was only natural that my style began to drift more towards black metal as I was completely submerged in this fascinating new sound. Around 1999 I had some material written, and shortly after with some good friends formed a band called Hellstrike. There wasn't much of a "scene" for black metal around our area at this time. We recorded 4-track demos and had plans to record an album, but these plans were scrapped when the band ended. We played one live show in 2003, shortly before the end of this band. While the band was active, we self-released one demo which was only circulated in about 30 copies amongst people we knew. Later on, a collection of demo and live tracks was released on cassette via Terrorwolfe Productions. The style of the Hellstrike material was much different from what I would do in the future. It was much more fast, and influenced by the likes of early Marduk, early Dark Funeral, War (Swe), Dawn, etc. The vocalist and collaborating writer of Hellstrike went on to his own project Born of Witch, and I continued on to form my own project in a more atmospheric direction known as Veil.

***Dolor* and *Sombre* are very peculiar works, a sort of melancholic and aristocratic black metal. What are your sources of inspiration? How important is Burzum to your musical background?**

As mentioned previously, Burzum was a very big influence on me in the beginning. I felt almost obligated to record a cover in order to pay my respects to this significant inspiration. While Burzum did serve as a big influence, I felt that Veil began to take on a life of its own once I had a couple songs written for *Dolor*. With Veil I wanted to concentrate on one very specific and particular feeling, exploring the possibilities and subtleties within that feeling. The songwriting process for me is very slow, calculated and dictated very strictly by this feeling. Nothing is by chance, nothing is "filler". Song lengths and the repetition of riffs/themes are all very intentional and deliberate. I don't like to talk too much about the songs, leaving them open to interpretation by the listener, so I will leave it at that for now

**You run a label called Terrorwolfe Productions. The sentence «*True Ideological Black Metal since 2003*» appears on your website. Could you tell us more about this**



*Dolor (2004), Veil's debut, and Sombre (2008), recently reissued on Terrorwolfe Productions (2012)*

activity? What do you mean by the term «True Ideological»?

Well, as many people know, I took somewhat of a “break” from Terrorwolfe for a couple years. I had business to take care of in my personal life, which didn’t allow me the luxury of running the label/distro as it should be. So, as I returned to a more active role in the black metal scene again, I noticed that a definite change had occurred. I’m sure this happened slowly and perhaps wasn’t noticed by most as it was a gradual change. But since I hadn’t been dealing with bands and labels on a large scale for a couple years, it seems very evident to me. This “change” seemed to be a lack of ideology amongst the newer generation of black metal bands and fans. Part of the enthralling nature of black metal is that it DOES stand for something. It’s often said that “black metal is more than just music” and I believe this sincerely. I’m not saying that this means you must walk around in corpsepaint and spikes in your daily life, but there is a definite defiant attitude and spirit that is present in real black metal, and as a fan and musician this spirit also permeates your personal life.

With the new generation, I notice a lot of “black metal is just music” type attitudes, and a lot of kids who listen to the classic bands (that we hold in high regard) but completely separate the ideology that is (was) present in these bands. Now there are fashionable hipsters who wear Burzum and Absurd shirts but completely disregard the spirit that these bands represent. They say things like “well they just said these things when they were young and confused” or “I just like the music, I don’t pay attention to what the band thinks” and other dismissive statements. I think this is completely wrong and misses the point of black metal. So, with the statement on the website of “True Ideological Black Metal”, I wanted to make





# Terrorwolfe Productions



Black Metal, NSBM, RAC, & More

[www.terrorwolfe.com](http://www.terrorwolfe.com)

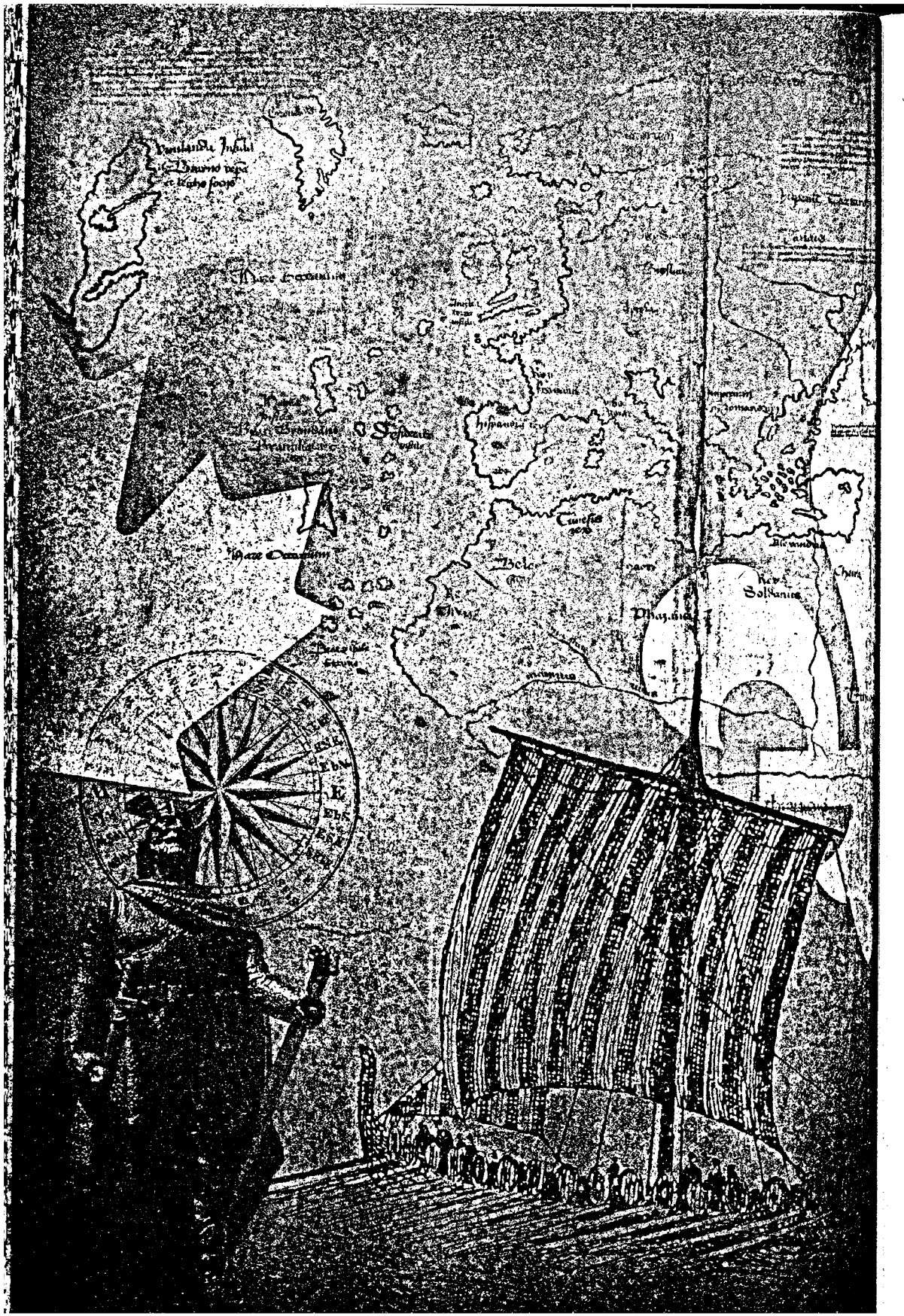



it prominently noted that I intend to work and distribute bands who hold strong to the original ideals of black metal. that's not to say that I scrutinize the interviews or lyrics of every single band that I distribute in the distro, but I certainly have a specific vision of the bands released by the label that will bear the "Terrorwolfe Productions" logo.

I'm of the opinion that Black Metal should have one of two potential effects on a prospective listener. It should enthrall or it should offend. If it does neither, it's not black metal.

Veil is a «*Proud Supporter of the Pagan Front*». The curious thing is that, Veil is one the least ideological bands of this whole scene. In one of your emails you wrote: «*Obviously music is my main priority. Political ideology is important of course, and plays a significant role in all our lives, but if I only intended to spread a political message, would be running for government rather than playing in a black metal band*». What's the meaning of being a Pagan Front member?

Well when I first became involved with The Pagan Front, it was primarily a network of like-minded individuals working together and helping each other out towards a common goal. I think it was a pretty natural development for me to become involved in this network considering my personal interests and feelings towards black metal. There are some great people involved, as well as some with phenomenal resources. So when you are trying to promote a style of music that is scorned by the masses, it's quite helpful to have a network like this in place. I've met some great comrades with this involvement who I'm sure will continue to be life-long friends. Also, I would add, it's quite a variety of bands involved with Pagan Front. Everything from bands with interests strictly in ancient Paganism all the way up to bands interested in National Socialist ideals almost exclusively. So it's a pretty diverse group.





# Sang Nordique

## The Canadian hordes

«MAJESTUEUSE ET TRAGIQUE EST TON HISTOIRE, NOTRE TERRE DES VENTS NORDIQUES NOUS CHANTONS TA GLOIRE»<sup>1</sup>

[FjÖRD]

**T**he ultimate essence and inherent peculiarities of the Canadian extreme metal scene, including that fringe which goes by the acronym NSBM, are inextricably linked to the historical past of the former British colony. Although originally reached by Europeans of Viking ancestry, who landed on the coast of today's Newfoundland, christening it Vinland, the first real colonization did not take place until 1497, when the Italian-born explorer Giovanni Caboto again reached its shores at the helm of a ship flying a British flag, nearly 500 years after the Viking landing. A few decades later, it was the turn of the French, who created the first permanent colonies, giving birth to New France. From then on, the flow of migration from the Old Continent was constant, closing ties with nations of origin and creating a dualism that inevitably marked national identity over the centuries. The borders of the two colonial powers changed several times, following conflicts and treaties, finally agreeing on the definition of Canada as we know it today: a federal state, divided into provinces and territories, among which Québec stands out as the last French-speaking bastion driven by a desire for independence dating back to the mid 1900s, a true nation within a nation. «*We are living a pretty unique situation in the world, being but a mere 6 million French speaking people surrounded by about 300 million English speaking ones (US included)*»<sup>2</sup> this is how Myrkhaal of Frozen Shadows sums it up, one of the first bands to bring forth the theme of *Québécois* nationalism that will gradually become recurrent in the productions of a certain black metal enclave of French traditions.

This troubled history is also reflected in the extreme ideological scene, as it combines a diverse set of projects which, often end up having very different stances from one another while drawing from a common cultural background. While on one hand, there are manifestations of faith towards the worship of Hitler or proclamations glorifying the strength and the consolidation of a white racial identity, on the other, there is a movement that openly draws from the history and customs of the original French colonies and finds its thematic focus in the separatist causes of this minority. With nationalism on one side, National Socialism on the other, and paganism and racial issues in the middle,

a scenario is created that is extremely difficult to decipher. One in which the origins and cultural heritage are the discriminating elements of the ideologies and concepts expressed by the various bands, and the past history of the country plays an extremely significant role in defining a music scene. "Conventional" NSBM still found a way to take root, from East to West, in the fertile Canadian soil, creating a scene that, while a little frayed because of the great distances, is certainly alive and present."



Godless North hail from the remote lands of the far West, the band has been active since the mid-Nineties and is based in British Columbia. They have released a number of demos, split albums (among which it is worth mentioning one with Chemin de Haine from France and another with Decayed, Apolokia and the well-known Nargaroth) and a full length titled *Summon the Age of Supremacy* (2001), marked by classic and ultra-fast black metal. The band's entire discography was later reissued by the well-known



*The cover of World in Flames (2012) by Godless North*

label Darker Than Black in the form of double retrospective CD (*Fimbulvetr*), an operation that also sanctioned the return of the band after a hiatus of almost six years. This collaboration has gone far beyond the mere relationship between artist and label owner: the lyrics of the EP *World in Flames* were actually penned by Hendrik Möbus, owner of the German label, as well as historical founder of Absurd.

Although from an iconographic point of view, Godless North are devoid of blatant ideological references, the ideas of Othlaz, the band's leader, are quite explicit:

*«We all have a racial soul, which lives on through the continued existence of our blood. It is passed on through generations. Our goal must be to awaken the spirit within us of our ancestors (who are really in fact the gods in which we are directly descended from!). [...] We will continue to live on through the passing of our Aryan blood... Hail the "14 Words"!»<sup>3</sup>.*

The reference to the infamous "14 Words" and the racist conception of paganism are perfectly in line with the dictates of Wotanism advocated by David Lane, along with the rejection of Christianity and the selection of ancient cults as the only way to salvation for white men.



The particular path of Godless North has not spawned many imitators, although British Columbia is a land that has always boasted a solid tradition in extreme music. Take as an example intransigent names like Conqueror and Revenge - considered the pioneers of the so-called war metal, a violent merger between black and death metal taken to an extreme - as well as the seminal Blasphemy, devoted to a relentless mix of musical and thematic excesses, who are among the most famous bands to emerge from the obscure Canadian underground. The band has been active since the mid-Eighties, and they were the first to define themselves as "Satanic Skinhead" or "Black Metal Skinhead", a definition that has stuck with them ever since and, by extension, identifies a large part of the scene that revolves around them. Inspirers and precursors of a most iconoclastic and anti-social black metal, their path in search of the extreme is marked by a history of violence, chaos and self-mutilation during concerts (reportedly, even a suicide during a gig in Germany<sup>4</sup>), with lots of rituals, ceremonies and the desecration of cemeteries - in particular the Ross Bay Cemetery, from which they derived the name of their own label, Ross Bay Cult. Blasphemy's faith lies in chaos and destruction, a fury that hits everything and everyone without distinctions of any kind, and in which there is no room for racial discrimination, considering the presence of a black guitarist in the line-up, Caller of the Storms, a bandmember from the very beginning. This fact has never created any problems, because of the aura of myth that surrounds the project and the particular situation in Vancouver:



*Blasphemy's promo flyer*

*«We hail from Vancouver, Canada, which has a fucking HUGE skinhead scene, you have tons of skinheads, they all respect Blasphemy and everybody knows and respects Caller Of The Storms, then you have the Hammerskins, Odin's Wildboys, sharp skins who are against the racists, tons of black metal skinheads [...]. We all support each other since we are all skinheads, even if some stuff is sometimes a bit different. Except maybe Odin's Law maybe, I guess it is cuz they are a bit more heavy-duty Nazi»<sup>5</sup>.*

This geographically remote scene is nourished by excesses that smoothly assimilate followers of metal, skinheads of all kinds, and fans of black and death metal. While we certainly cannot talk about political convergence, given the total lack of a coherent ideological foundation, this scene provides the first example of spontaneous

aggregation in the name of extremism that took place between the skinhead and the metal scenes.

Traveling eastward, and deliberately ignoring some minor productions that dangerously veer toward Nazi-like exploitation, the incomparable destructive fury of the wild West progressively leans towards a more orthodox National Socialist black metal matrix. Such is the case with Geimhre, based in Ontario and active since early 2000, they began playing a mixture of folk and black metal with RAC influences that progressively faded during the course of their career. Affiliated with the Pagan Front, the band has attained a certain level of recognition as the result of some demos, a couple of split albums (one with the French band Ad Hominem, the other with their compatriots Shade, released by Stellar Winter) and two full-lengths that were released between 2005 and 2008. Further interest arose after their only official live performance, immortalized on a tape titled *Hinterland Suthainn*, along with several demo tracks, which took place in Toronto in 2004 in front of a diverse audience: «*There were drunk skins singing in the mic and making random speeches during our set. It was really something to see WP skins and regular black metal people together without any confrontations or trouble*»<sup>6</sup>.

The debut album, *Mollachd*, released in 2005 by Vinland Winds, is marked by rough and linear, slow-paced black metal, which includes acoustic and vaguely symphonic passages; a musical architecture onto which the usual fierce blows are thrown against ZOG (*Battlefield Vinland, Crushing Zion*) and the Islamic world (*The Subhuman Prophet*). The booklet ends in a controversial manner, topped with wishes for assorted diseases and misfortunes directed at Inertia Entertainment - renamed Jewnertia Entertainment - guilty of having boycotted, for alleged legal reasons, the performance of Grand Belial's Key, as headliners of the Northern Lights Festival in Toronto in 2003. This occurred at the last minute and with an already full venue, according to the undiplomatic statements made by frontman Guerfaul to the fanzine *Tongue of the Wolf*<sup>7</sup> (an invective already expressed in the notes of the split album *We Are the Wolves ... You Are the Sheep/Black Sabbath* and also reiterated in the booklet of the second full-length, a sign that the NSBM scene hardly forgets a wrongdoing). Returning to a purely musical matter, the following album, *Noidagh* (2008), is a more compact and refined work than its predecessor, although anchored to the same foundation of sound. The subjects of the lyrics also remain fixed, as can be easily sensed upon reading some unequivocal song titles such as *Holocaust Rising* or *Judeopig*.

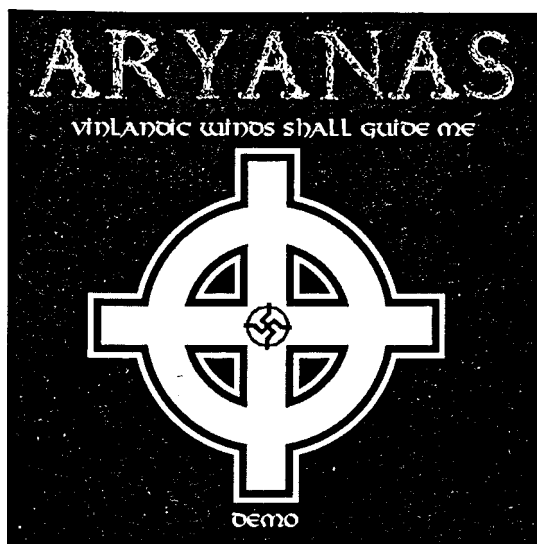
Although they are certainly not innovators, Geimhre are still the manifestation of a convergence between radical beliefs and black metal ferocity, capable of not only attracting a typically black metal audience but also members of the local extreme milieu, in a partnership that Guerfaul hopes to develop on a larger scale, in order to expand the scene and engage new followers through a more widespread dissemination of ideas:

«*It's much harder to make an impact like Skrewdriver did for racialism or like member's actions in Mayhem did for anti-Christianity. The best way to fight is to inform for now and*

*to try to stir the feelings of brotherhood amongst the useful people in our society [...] People should organize shows with both NS and regular black metal/death metal bands to help spread the message. The metal scenes should unite with the skinhead sect as well. With those numbers comes great strength»<sup>8</sup>.*

The one-man band Aryanas also emerged from Ontario; in spite of a meteoric existence, (2005-2007) he released two demos, an EP (*Musical Terrorist*) and a split album entitled *Aryan Warmongers* with the Australian band Murdergoat and Drunemeton from the U.S., a release that the Canadian would later distance himself from, given the weak and transitory commitment to the cause shown by the other two bands. The leader, Aryanas Nokturnus, spares no epithets when speaking about the matter: Drunemeton, having denied the racist cause, are accused of treason; Murdergoat are branded as drug dealers and addicts who are not ashamed to do business with «niggers and other non-whites»<sup>9</sup>.

The primordial and explicit message of the early tapes, which was blatantly Nazi as per the musician's own admission, leaves room for various other subjects, mediated by a particular doctrine that established itself in the United States around the mid-Seventies. Aryanas Nokturnus was struck by the writings of Ben Klassen of the Church of the



Creator, and his pragmatic theorem that race is the only religion. A thesis fully embraced by the founder of the Canadian project, in stark contrast with the usual combination of National Socialism and paganism that is most popular:

*«Our beliefs are based around our race and not some old myths written thousands of years ago. Our race is our religion, and we are dedicated to the survival, expansion and advancement of the white race, and only the white race»<sup>10</sup>.*

Apart from the singular commitment to the principles of Creativity, Aryanas's legacy is anything but memorable. *Dawn of a Noble Era*, their only full-length work, delivers predictable and contrived black metal. The few good riffs are muffled by a rambling drum machine which, together with inadequate production, penalizes the overall performance. Moreover, of the nine tracks on the album, four are nothing but irritating pseudo-electronic ambient interludes of poor workmanship, which add nothing to the album except the minutes needed to classify it as a full-length; it is therefore obvious that the result will not remain in the annals.



*Eternal Hate (2006), the split between  
SS Mann and Wolfhammer Division*

Even in Canada, we have seen that a form of ideological black metal has taken hold, with an arsenal of claims that are typical for this genre. Less influenced by the thesis and aesthetics of Nazi Germany, which historically have a greater effect on the collective imagination of the Old World, Canadian NSBM seems to leverage on the European genetic legacy, praising the direct Nordic-Aryan lineage - and a pagan belief permeated by racial claims, similar to what we have witnessed in the United States. Gradually moving towards the East, arguments that the descendants of the French settlers hold dear and references to a tortuous historical path threatened by the cultural and political hegemony of the English majority tend to earn space. However, it would be wrong to think that Québec presents a one-dimensional reality within whose boundaries there are only those issues that are important to the French-speaking minority. Indeed, here too

there have been examples of visceral Hitler worship.

This concerns minor projects, aligned with the dogmas of Nazi-inspired aesthetic intransigence, such as SS Mann, Opfer Rassenhass, or Svartr Sturm, who put out a series of fragmentary releases among demos, split albums and some coveted full-lengths,

in which nationalism and deep Right-wing inclinations merge. Songs such as *National Socialist Black Metal Terrorist Propaganda*, *Guerre Opposée aux Immigrés*, *Fuck Antifa*, and *Résistance Identitaire* give the idea that in the *Nouvelle-France* it is not difficult to find those who have chosen to stand in the shadow of the swastika.

In order to gain the necessary visibility, the bands mentioned above - assisted by other associates from the United States - decided to gather under the auspices of an organization called Vinland Front, founded in 2008 on the American-Canadian axis by elements of the already established Heathen Circle (yet another multidisciplinary network for the promotion of paganism and white culture<sup>11</sup>). The Vinland Front is a sort of embryonic imitation of the Pagan Front, sharing much of its theoretical structure but treating NSBM as just one of the many supported music genres, as other forms of extreme metal are also hosted - if consistent with a specific ideological orientation.

*«As a matter of fact, there's only two Vinland Front bands that have openly claimed their belongings to the NSBM scene and those are Opfer Rassenbass and SS Mann. [...] It doesn't matter whether you play NSBM or not. NSBM, pagan BM, war BM etc... etc... those are just words, what matters is the ideology. The most important thing is that we all have a common goal and that all are supporting each other»<sup>12</sup>.*

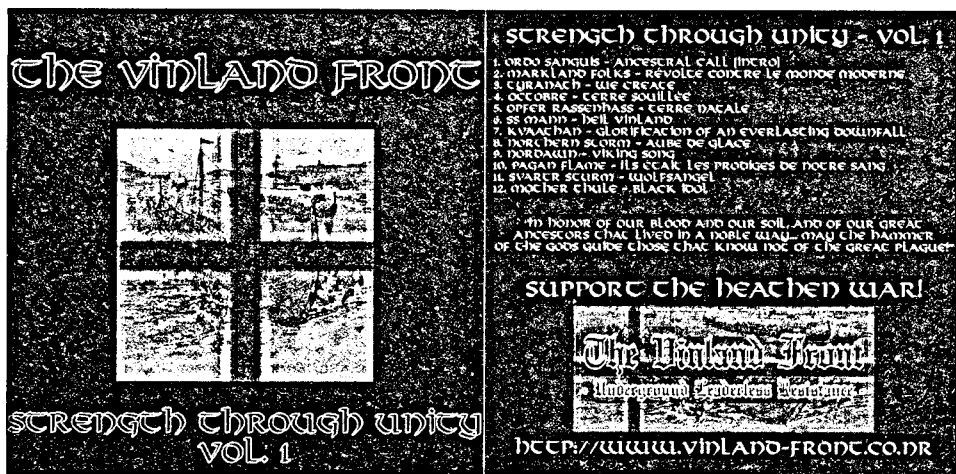
To certify its presence, the Vinland Front resorted to the tried and tested compilation method.



*Blut und Boden (2004) by Wolfhammer Division*



*Heathen Circle's logo*



Thus, another collection-manifesto took shape (distributed in digital format) titled *Vinland Front - Strength Through Unity Vol.1* (2009), which contains the work of several entities orbiting around North American extremism (Octobre, Opfer Rassenhass, SS Mann, Kvaathan, Svartr Sturm among others). From an organizational point of view, the Vinland Front resumed a structure that is widely spread among all sorts of subversive movements, which was introduced to the extreme Right milieu by Louis Beam, a Vietnam veteran who became an exponent of white nationalism, first among the ranks of the Ku Klux Klan, and then the Aryan Nations. The idea was to end the pyramidal system, which consists of a leader and a vertical power structure down to the lower levels where the masses receive directives (the most obvious example would be the army). This type of system, according to Beam, is easily penetrated by the enemy and therefore destined to fail. The alternative is to resort to "ghost cells", totally independent and fully autonomous, without any coordination center, thus hindering any attempt at enemy infiltration, which would lead to the unmasking of a single cell without consequences for the others. Applying these precepts to the propaganda activities of the Vinland Front, means that anyone is free to work or produce material adhering to the guidelines of the movement, being aware that any official support from the organization is not guaranteed and will be decided in retrospect.

A pretentious and elusive structure for what is ultimately a simple network for artistic promotion, and all the high-sounding intentions seem to have been disregarded: in a scene that struggles to direct itself, because it is underground and neglected, the absence of a hierarchical structure and concrete projects proved fatal. The website which was supposed to act as a hub for coordination went offline within a couple of years, and basically, the Vinland Front went missing.

Among the pioneers of this Aryan revival we should not forget the brief existence of Nacht und Nebel, advocates of ferocious black metal infused with Nazi ideology and anti-Semitic proclamations pronounced by a barely human voice: *The Drowning Source of*



Nacht Und Nebel's demo Totalen Krieg (2005)

*Triumph...* and *Totalen Krieg*, released between 2002 and 2005, are the most tangible legacy of this cult band that, before its demise, recorded a last song for the split album with Der Stürmer and Brazil's Evil, titled *Those Who Want to Create... Must Have The Will to Destroy!*. Although its contribution on the musical front appears modest in terms of both quantity and quality, the sole member, Vjohrrnt V. Wodansson, is a key figure in the Canadian scene. In addition to leading Nacht und Nebel, he was the founder and owner of the now defunct NSBM Records (acronym for "Northern Supremacy Battle Music", although the implied reference is obvious), which was officially affiliated with the Pagan Front. The manifesto published on the website certifies that the name of the label was not chosen at random:

*«[...] we need to have a certain bond amongst ourselves. An Aryan solidarity based on trust, honor and loyalty, to ourselves and others, but most importantly of all: to the principals in which we believe in. [...] The problem of many "supposed" NS individuals is their chauvinism. They claim to be above the very principals that they are supposed to believe in, that is not the mark of the noble soul. We all have our own worth, but we are still men, and those eternal principles in which we believe; courage, honor, loyalty, solidarity, wisdom, integrity, pride, strength, do not belong to us, we belong to them»<sup>13</sup>.*

The most important project that involves Wodansson is Fjörd, the leading exponents of the aforementioned Heathen Circle and affiliated to the Pagan Front. After only one demo titled *Vinlandic Northern Heritage* and participation on the historical compilation *The Night and the Fog* part three, they landed on Totenkopf Propaganda releasing their debut album *Vor Tru* (2009).

Musically, Fjörd offer a rather crude mix of pagan and folk metal heavily influenced by Bathory's Viking period. The vocals, existing in a purely clean range, recite lyrics that find their safe haven in the Nordic myth once again, but this time are filled with racist





Vjohrrnt V. Wodansson

invectives to complement a concept that deems adherence to the pagan myth and preservation of the white man and his country of origin as indivisible (in the song *Vinland the Proud* there is even an explicit reference to the "14 Words").

If the lyrics betray a fervent attachment to their history, tradition and European descent, being from Québec is not a factor that is silently ignored. However, the feeling of belonging to the French community is not an obstacle to co-existing with the English-speaking population; as there are other matters that pertain to the concept of national identity:

*«[...] Québec which to many of us, may be geographically linked to Canada, but in our hearts is a Nation of its own. [...] As far as I am concerned, I have nothing against English speaking individuals, as long as they are white of course. [...] When you promote Aryan unity, you learn to cultivate links with comrades who speak a different language than your own»<sup>14</sup>.*

For Wodansson, the national question, which is important from the point of view of cultural heritage, is still considered secondary to those concepts that are far more substantial and intimately linked to pagan belief. In his vision, national pride - understood as a heritage of the people - necessarily goes with a legacy of European ancestry, a primary discriminating factor before any other possible consideration. He said himself that he was not particularly proud of the historical past culminating in the struggle for the independence of the Canadian people, who did not hesitate to strike an alliance with non-white minorities in order to achieve victory.

His ideological substratum seemed obvious ever since his time with *Nacht und Nebel*, although in recent times Wodansson has declared to not to fully share the National Socialist label, a doctrine that he considers only partly positive as it is a product of the modern world, and therefore in contrast with his being a traditionalist. Having a political belief that is clearly and openly placed in the extreme Right zone is secondary for him, and a consequence of his choice of Odinism as the sole center of gravity: in an article entitled *Ethnonational Tribalism*, published in the first issue of the magazine *Heathen Call* (Canadian publication linked to the *Heathen Circle*), Wodansson speaks



of the need for a departure from modern civilization and a return to rural community, in a process of self-segregation based on the race one belongs to.

Despite having released only one album, Fjörd play a crucial role in the North American scene. Based in Montreal, they are an emblematic example of the convergence between the NSBM current - understood in its broadest sense - and the feeling of identity at the core of the movement that started in Québec. We are referring to the so-called Métal Noir



Québécois (henceforth MNQ), a banner that has gathered an ensemble of projects in recent years and has created a lot of buzz thanks to some excellent productions. Bands like Frozen Shadows, Akitsa, Forteresse, Grimoire, Neige et Noireur, Monarque, Thesyre, and Brume d'Automne, to name a few, were able to reinterpret the classic dictates of black metal fusing them with traditional folk scores dominated by lyrics in French, often focused on the history of the former colony.

Québec's black metal enjoys a certain popularity among the leaders of the most radical movements<sup>15</sup>, and the nationalist fervor that animates these newborn identitarian minstrels has led to inevitable speculations, to the point that some consider the MNQ as an offshoot of NSBM, with a more "exotic" angle. It should, however, be pointed out that in this case, although there are some points of contact between the National Socialist scene and that of Québec, the pagan and racist background that is typical of NSBM is missing and, when present, should be considered as a convergence of ideas pertaining to the individual project, not a characteristic trait of the whole scene.

While tracing the first signs of this emerging phenomenon, it is inevitable that we stumble upon Frozen Shadows, who have been active since the mid-Nineties: their debut *Dans les Bras des Immortels* (1998), although still traditional musically, is marked by fast and obscure black metal, characterized by atmospheric keyboard inserts that became a trademark for the bands of the French enclave - songs like *Lunes Funèbres* contain some musical intuitions which will be reprised a decade later. From a lyrical point of view, there is no indication of an actual Nazi political agenda in the work of Frozen Shadows although we can find a common ground with other Right-wing bands, and even though their name - like that of other bands from the same geographic area - is often associated with the sprawling phenomenon of NSBM. Despite this, the leader Myrkhall, (who also runs Sepulchral Productions, a record label that will become a



*Frozen Shadows*

launching pad for many bands that will later converge in MNQ) still provides an interesting perspective on what may be the underlying causes of the progressive spreading of National Socialist metal:



*«I think the whole NSBM thing has a lot more to do with countries with very old traditions seeing their heritage in danger because of a massive immigration [...]. I think everyone would get upset if they saw people who sometimes do not care the least about their traditions and the way their country was built settling in their land en masse. I for sure am extremely worried about this situation in Québec, and this is quite a "young" country!»<sup>16</sup>.*

Another relevant name that has paved the way for the advancement of the Canadian music horde, is certainly Akitsa. Fellow citizens of

Frozen Shadows, they debuted just a few years later, offering a deadly mixture of raw black metal bordering on cacophony (the 2005 split album with the renowned American noise-maker Prurient is significant) that owes a lot to Absurd, Ildjarn and that punk/Oi! germ that has often undermined the defenses of less orthodox black metal bands. Thanks to a large number of split albums and EPs - with the inevitable Satanic Warmaster, but also with the controversial The Shadow Order - and some rather excellent full-lengths, Akitsa have codified their own black metal style. *La Grande Infamie* or *Sang Nordique* are a manifesto of both musical and conceptual integrity, understood as loyalty to the founding themes of Québécois metal:

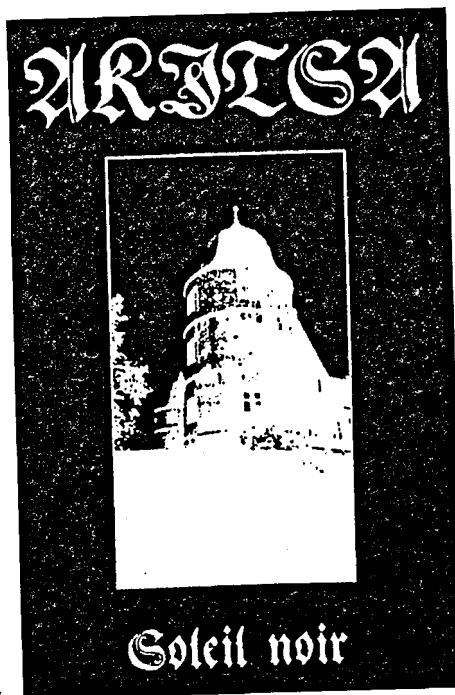
*«Children of the North, sons of the cold  
Fight for your legacy and your culture  
The thorny forests where the wind blows  
The white snow of rare purity*

*Nordic blood  
Give an identity to this land!»<sup>17</sup>*

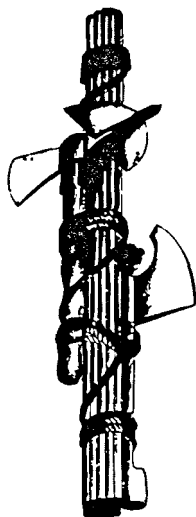
Just like Frozen Shadows, Akitsa were also unceremoniously thrown into the NSBM cauldron, perhaps because of the awkward collaborations and the iconography they used. However, O.T., founding member and owner of the record label Tour de Garde, has never identified himself with this definition, in fact, he doubts the actual logic that lies behind the fragmentation of black metal into air tight subgenres, often operated by third parties for an easier classification of the "product":

*«We do not consider Akitsa to be a NSBM band. Of course we do have nationalistic views but that doesn't mean automatically that we are NS. Akitsa was/is/will always be black metal, that's all I can say»<sup>18</sup>.*

*«Perhaps I am wrong, but I believe that these references are there to generate some kind of hype, and I find them quite useless. Black metal isn't NSBM, USBM, or any other category that might be used. Black metal is black metal... that's it, that's all»<sup>19</sup>.*



## AKITSÄ



## Ode au temps passé

Fascism this can be seen as aesthetic appeal, leveraged on the destabilizing power of uncomfortable symbols, imprinted in the collective unconscious.

Turning back to the quick rise of the scene in Montreal and the surrounding area, this fledgling trend found its own organic dimension in 2006, thanks to Forteresse, a band destined to significantly alter the local scene. Their album *Métal Noir Québécois* (2006) is more than just a debut, it is the baptism of a genre that would inherit the name, redefined by a unique fusion of aesthetics, music and themes. First of all, it marked the return of Sepulchral Productions, which seemed to silently await this moment since the release of Frozen Shadows's debut, thus establishing an unbreakable bond with MNQ. The record is quite refined, starting with the simple but distinctive cover: in addition to the band's logo and album title, there is the picture of Canadian violinist Joseph Allard on a black background, (a significant choice, considering the violin samples that open three tracks on the

In O.T.'s vision, black metal is unique, and consequently no subject - even when controversial in nature - is to be considered out of place. To confirm this well-rounded vision, one need only look at Tour de Garde's mailorder, whose catalog includes the finest names of MNQ along some big shots of contemporary NSBM. When focusing on Akitsä's iconography, there are certain references that can upset the guardians of black metal integrity: from D'Annunzio's idiomatic motto «*Me ne frego!*» ("I don't give a damn!") which is proudly displayed in the new logo, to the cover of the EP *Soleil Noir* which depicts one of the towers of Wewelsburg castle, ending with the graphics used for an infamous t-shirt on which a stylized fasces is accompanied by the slogan «*Ode to the past*». A nod to totalitarianism is obvious, but perhaps, more than a blind ideological adherence to Nazi-

## FORTERESSE



métal noir québécois

album), and this is the first indication of a fresh artistic approach. Their black metal develops in long and hypnotic compositions, with strong atmospheric and crepuscular touches, full of melancholy and genuine epic inspiration. The melodic digressions that appeared in *Dans les Bras des Immortels* by Frozen Shadows find their ideal location here, in communion with the identitarian example offered by Akitsa, all filtered through an unprecedented dramatic sensitivity. It is the title track that has the task of standing as a programmatic piece, and a short violin phrasing kicks off the patriotic onslaught of the song, which proves to be a perfect conceptual summation of Forteresse's work:



*Moribond of Forteresse*

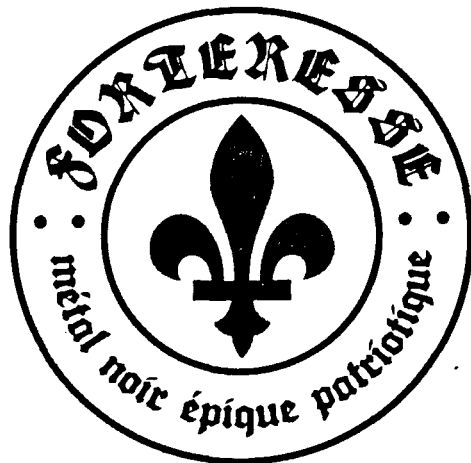
*«Our victory will be glorious  
Against those who betray our  
motherland  
And pretend to be a part of  
The real land*

*We shall never bow  
To the lying politicians  
Who hide the only truth  
Of our Quebecois sadness*

*The strength resides in each one  
Of those whose pride  
Was not crushed  
By the weight of treachery*

*Today the nation is reborn  
And from its ashes  
Appears the memory  
Of those who were, are and will be*

*The bearers of the flag  
Of liberty and of the people»<sup>20</sup>*



On the back cover, the declaration «*métal noir épique patriotique*» (“epic and patriotic black metal”) is an unambiguous statement of intent, which certifies what is expressed in the lyrics and explains the band’s purpose, taking a specific stance regarding a major concern:

*«I am tired of all these word games that define what is “politically correct” and what is not. Call it whatever you like, it’s all the same to us. Since when is black metal a harbinger of ideologies of tolerance and understanding? We ask for nothing but the respect and recognition of our nation, which is set apart from the rest of Canada. Not because of racism or xenophobia, but just because of dignity»<sup>21</sup>.*



*The cover of Crépuscule d'Octobre (2011)  
by Forteresse*

This debut was followed by three more albums, which explore different sonic territories. We find this exploration in *Les Hivers De Notre Époque* (2008), embellished with graphics liberally taken from the works of Cornelius Krieghoff<sup>22</sup>, and even more so in *Par Hauts Bois et Vastes Plaines* (2010), both indelibly marked by long, almost ambient passages and hazy instrumental interludes veiled by Nordic melancholy, up to *Crépuscule d'Octobre* (2011) which hides a partial return to their origins behind a surprisingly solar cover, in pursuit of less dilated and more visceral black metal.

In a certain way, we can consider Frozen Shadows, Akitsa and Forteresse as complementary elements, necessary and sufficient to shape the Métal Noir Québécois, but not to exhaust its creative impulse. They have opened Pandora’s box, which still continues to overflow with new realities willing to hold high the banner of a contended homeland. Obviously, there is a compilation-manifesto with which to take the pulse of the franco-phone scene. This operation was sponsored by Les Productions Hérétiques, a small label which released a compilation titled *Sous Le Lys Noir Vol 1* (2011) on a tape limited to one hundred copies. The album includes several new names that are fueling the flame, lit years earlier by the triad mentioned above, proving once more that Québec has not given birth to a transient and evanescent movement, but has been the godfather of a new current destined to persevere over time.



Therefore, NSBM and its offshoots have been able to take root in Canada too, relying on racist theories and a pagan atavism that have replaced an anachronistic nostalgia

for the Third Reich, an influence far too remote in the cold Canadian lands, shaken by far more tangible internal tensions, in those years, than a conflict taking place overseas. To the detriment of the much-abused acronym, National Socialism in the Great North seems to boil down to a banner to agitate against the relentless expansion of a multiethnic and capitalist global society, which is marching towards the obliteration of national identities, in the eyes of the fiercest defenders of radical thinking. It is in defense of a cultural and linguistic historical legacy, that a black vanguard in Québec has risen, which with little foresight, has been reduced to a mere and improvised filiation of National Socialist metal. However, what is interesting is to see how the Métal Noir Québécois is yet another demonstration of the strong bond that exists between Right-wing political visions - in the broadest sense - and extreme music, especially black metal which, strengthened by its habitual drawing upon history, traditions and mythologies, has become the favorite instrument over time through which to put all sorts of claims into music, whether they originate from a tragic past or an uncertain present.

## Notes:

- 1 - «*Majestic and tragic is your history, our land of Nordic winds, we sing your glory*». From the booklet of *Vor Tru*, the debut album by Fjörd (2009).
- 2 - Frozen Shadows, from Mourning the Ancient ([www.mourningtheancient.com](http://www.mourningtheancient.com)).
- 3 - Godless North, from Mourning the Ancient ([www.mourningtheancient.com](http://www.mourningtheancient.com)).
- 4 - Blasphemy, from Stratanaël MegaSin, 2005.
- 5 - Ibid.
- 6 - Geimhre from Ghost Kommand n.1, March 2007.
- 7 - Geimhre, from Tongue of the Wolf (<http://geocities.com/tongueofthewolf>), February 2005.
- 8 - Geimhre, from Ghost Kommand n.1, March 2007.
- 9 - Aryanas, from Ghost Kommand n.1, March 2007.
- 10 - Ibid.
- 11 - Inevitable and almost trite to say, a double anthology was released to celebrate its activity (this time in mp3 format), which collects the exploits of bands from different backgrounds: Faethon, Eliwagar, Tiwaz, Iron Woods, Nordwan and of course Fjörd.
- 12 - Vinland Front, from Enemy of God - Vinland (<http://eogvinland.wordpress.com>), January 2009.
- 13 - From the ideological manifesto of NSBM Records published on the official website ([www.thepaganfront.com/nsbm](http://www.thepaganfront.com/nsbm)).
- 14 - Fjörd, from Ghost Kommand n.2, 2007.



## SANG NORDIQUE

15 - For example, see the statements given by the Vinland Front: «*We are real supporters of Quebecan Independence. That is necessary to be accepted among us even if you are not Quebecan. All true nationalists should support the idea of Quebec being able to be its own country in order to preserve its rich culture, heritage and traditions*» Vinland Front, from Enemy of God - Vinland (<http://eogvinland.wordpress.com>), January 2009.

16 - Frozen Shadows, from Maelstrom n.9 (<http://maelstrom.nu>), July 2009.

17 - Excerpt from the song *Sang Nordique* by Akitsa.

18 - Akitsa, from Blasphemous Underground ([www.blasphemousunderground.cjb.net](http://www.blasphemousunderground.cjb.net)), January 2003.

19 - Akitsa, from Pitchfork ([www.pitchfork.com](http://www.pitchfork.com)), May 2009.

20 - Excerpt from the song *Métal Noir Québécois* by Forteresse.

21 - Forteresse, from Rock'n'Balls ([www.rocknballs.com](http://www.rocknballs.com)), may 2012.

22 - Cornelius David Krieghoff (1815 - 1872) was a famous painter, born in Holland and later naturalized Canadian, particularly known for his beautiful representations depicting rural life and the picturesque winter landscapes.



# Vinland

«FORWARD BROTHERS, REWARD AWAITS THE BOLD AND BRAVE  
WHITE SONS OF NORTH, THROUGH HAIL AND STORMS, WE RODE THE WAVES  
WE BEACH THE SHIP UPON THE COAST OF WESTERN LAND»<sup>1</sup>

[BATHORY]

**V**inland is a word that emerges from a remote past, when the so-called New World was far from being officially discovered: in fact, this term was coined around the year 1000 to indicate the lands that stretched West of Greenland, on which some Viking explorers had landed five hundred years before Christopher Columbus. This extraordinary epic was already narrated in such Nordic sagas, as the *Saga of the Greenlanders* and the even more famous *Saga of Erik the Red* which, although containing some discrepancies, reports of an original but temporary colonization of the territories of the American far north. It was Leif Erikson, son of Erik the Red (himself discoverer of Greenland), who sailed westward encountering a prosperous land with lush fruits, and called it Vinland: *land of wine* or *pasture land*, according to possible interpretations. Irrefutable historical confirmation was later found when the remains of Viking settlements were discovered on the island of Newfoundland, the most famous of which was brought to light in 1962 at L'Anse aux Meadows. Today, Leif Erikson is celebrated by the neo-pagan community as the "founding father" of Vinland, a recognition that became almost official when the U.S. Congress proclaimed the Leif Erikson Day in 1964, an event that falls on October 9 each year.

Evidence shows that this almost forgotten story has made a dent in the present. What might appear as a mere academic question, considering the lack of influence in the subsequent definition of the States as we know them today, has carved out a place of honor in the collective imagination instead, becoming a poignant element of the pagan revival that



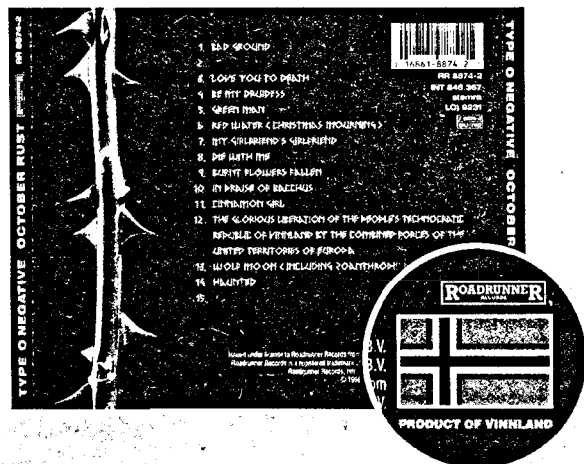
Commemorative stamp released for the  
Leif Erikson Day

has taken hold in the United States. The evidence of a permanent Viking presence provides a historically demonstrable continuity between the American and North European populations, moreover, in the wake of the archaeological discoveries, a renewed interest has given new life to those associations that strived to bring back the pre-Christian pagan cults since the late Sixties. In this atmosphere of revival, the name Vinland has been resurrected, and no longer relegated to the past, has become relatively common when referring to the entire North American territory.

Even in the extreme Right environment the concept of Vinland has become widespread, proving to be a practical historical foothold for the purpose of validating a cultural background. In this case, there is a double aim: on one side, narrowing down a white élite based on an atavistic European descent, on the other, reaffirming the primordial nature of pagan worship in opposition to Judeo-Christianity, later introduced by force. Moreover, for modern extremists, the affirmation of the existence of a supranational state older than the United States or Canada is also a form of rejection of the present order of things, in the hands of governments accused of being manipulated by the Jewish lobbies (the reference is to the aforementioned Zionist Occupational Government).

To represent this geographical macro-area that is not yet recognized, they have even created a flag following the design guidelines of flags from the Nordic countries: on a green background stands a characteristic Scandinavian cross - black with a white border - which extends horizontally across the surface, with the vertical arm decentralized to the left. The Scandinavian cross is an explicit reference to Christianity, so it is quite ironic that it was used for what has now become a symbol of the pagan roots of a territory.

Even more curious is the story that lies behind this flag without a country, which contains a pop connotation. Given that there has never been a State of Vinland, let alone any kind of official representation, it is obvious that color and effigy are of very recent definition: the unexpected patriarch of this land, capable of turning a dusty academic discussion into an effective symbol of popular value,



Detail of the Vinland flag on the back cover of Type O Negative's *October Rust* (1996)

responds to the name of Peter Steele<sup>2</sup>. It is on the back cover of the album *October Rust* (1996) by his band Type O Negative, that the infamous flag appears for the first time, accompanied by the words «*Product of Vinnland*». Moreover, in the tracklist there is a song curiously titled *The Glorious Liberation of the People's Technocratic Republic of Vinnland* by

*the Combined Forces of the United Territories of Europa*: a little over a minute of percussion and sampled sounds, but apparently enough to leave a mark, so that it is possible to trace the website of a serious and humorous organization on the Internet, that calls itself *Technocratic People's Republic of Vinnland* and defines Steele as a martyr of the "Vinnish Resistance" killed by a well-orchestrated pseudo-Masonic conspiracy with strong power in an attempt to interfere with the process of self-determination of the oppressed population of Vinland<sup>3</sup>. Going beyond these dystopian interpretations of the events, Steele explained the reasons that led him to write that track in an interview collected by Michael Moynihan for the magazine *Seconds*:

*«The fact that when the Vikings came here 1000 years ago, I wish that they had stayed. They actually named a very small part of Canada Vinland and I think it would have been a very nice name for this country. My disgust for the way things are being handled today by this nation has also led me to put this on the album. I was thinking it should either be the liberation or annexation of Vinland»<sup>4</sup>.*

The symbolic meaning of the flag of Vinland has gone beyond the intents of its creator, gaining such popularity that it has almost attained formality. For those who want to refer to that specific past, there is nothing more immediate than a recognizable and widely shared symbol. That is why, even though historically inaccurate, the black and white cross on a green background has become an effigy found on t-shirts, records, magazines, and concert posters. The term Vinland has shrugged off the academic halo to find more prosaic applications in other contexts: for example Vinland Winds, Richard Mills' label, the Canadian extreme Right organization Vinland Skinhead Front or the near-eponymous promotion network Vinland Front, which we have already mentioned.

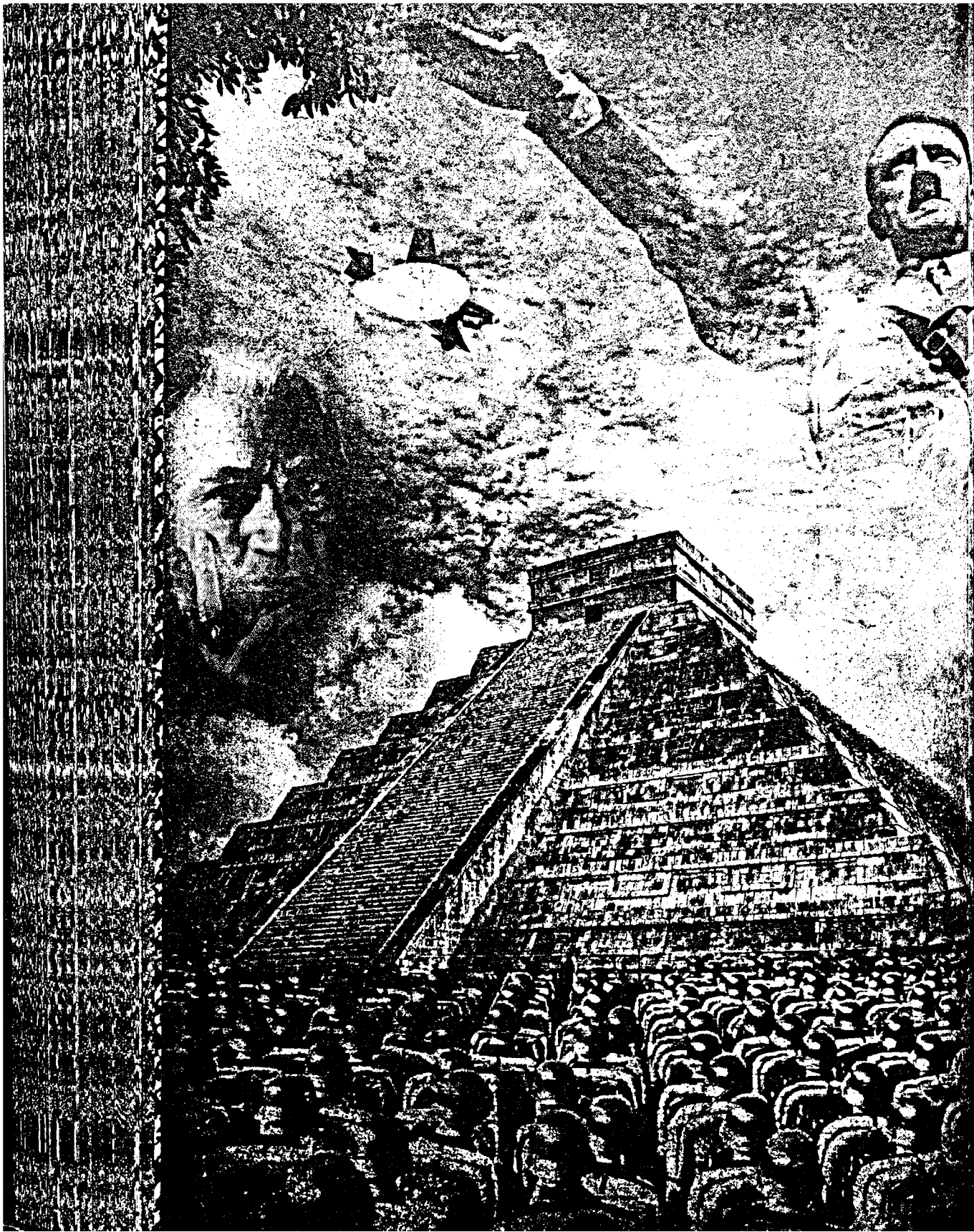
## Notes:

1 - Excerpt from the song *Vinland* by Bathory.

2 - New York metal singer and bass player, founder of the well-known bands Carnivore and Type O Negative, who sadly passed away in 2010 due to heart failure.

3 - «*They live unnoticed among us and wait for the day they can reclaim the country which is legally theirs and which they love so much. Under the leadership of the fearless Peter Steele the United Vinnland Peoples Front (disguised as the band Type O Negative) spreads its message of paganism, love for nature and socialist political ideals to the indigenous population of Vinnland*», from the website Technocratic People's Republic of Vinnland ([www.vinnland.info](http://www.vinnland.info)).

4 - Steele's answer is also echoed in a short article published on issue 56 of *Vor Tru* (1996), where the role the late singer had in spreading the word Vinland (and its flag) among a broad audience is discussed.



# Raja Blanca, Orgullo Blanco

## NSBM in Latin America, between elitism and inconsistencies

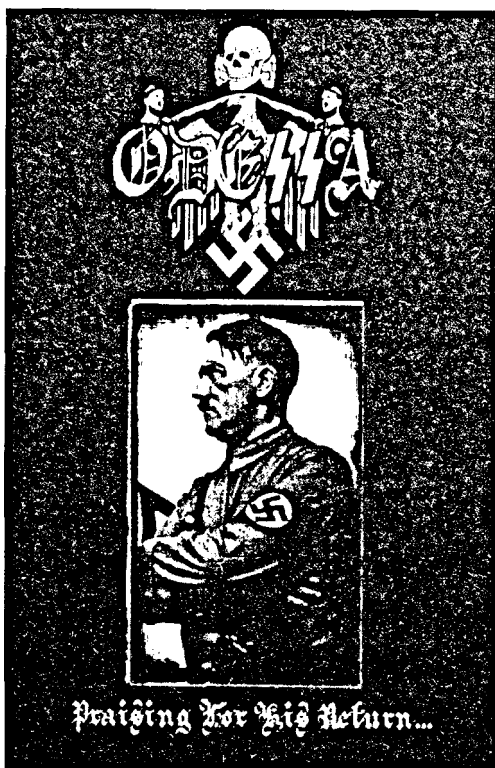
«DO YOU KNOW WHAT I SAW ON THE TELEVISION IN MY MOTEL ROOM AT ONE O' CLOCK THIS MORNING? FILMS OF HITLER. THEY ARE SHOWING FILMS ABOUT THE WAR! THE MOVEMENT! PEOPLE ARE FASCINATED! THE TIME IS RIPE! ADOLF HITLER IS ALIVE!»<sup>1</sup>

[THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL]

**N**either Spain nor Portugal are countries that can boast a solid roster of NSBM bands. Broadening the horizon to extreme metal in general (death, but mostly black), it is plain to see that these two countries have often suffered from a heavy quality deficit when compared to the rest of the continental scene. There is no shortage of initiatives, labels, bands, fanzines and so on, but the fact remains, that the end result is too poor and bleak to seriously consider their musical contribution. The work of a few keen characters is challenged by a magma of unconvincing bands and implications that are borderline to say the least.

As an example, let's take the discography of the infamous Spanish NSBM band (originally from Costa Rica) Heretical Warlust: on a purely musical level we are faced with lo-fi, primitive and guttural cacophony, one-dimensional arrangements which show an excessively folkloristic approach, and graphics that are both gory and unintentionally (?) ridiculous. The song titles say it all: *Carne Humana*, *Decapitación Antisemita*, *Tropas SS*, *Un Genocidio Total*, *Todo es una Mierda...*<sup>2</sup>. Odessa, in spite of a high-sounding moniker with unequivocal historical references, prove to be rather predictable with the 2012 release of a mediocre demo for Juden Raus Records.<sup>3</sup> Also, the EP on cassette titled *Esoteric National Socialist Black Metal* by Andalusians Orcus





Tyrannus does not seem to convincingly contribute to the NSBM cause; the feeling is that of the nth release after the maximum time limit, which really offers very little in terms of refined avantgarde.

Setting sail from the wretched Ibero-Portuguese roster, and following the route opened by two of the greatest colonial empires of the past history, reaching South America opens even more exotic and unruly horizons for National Socialist-inspired metal. The NSBM that has arisen in the lands of the Southern hemisphere in recent years, offers all kinds of surprises and upheavals, often radically distorting canons and precepts as originally understood in many other areas of the globe.



The leading country in terms of identitarian eccentricity is definitely Mexico, especially taking into account how various local bands have encouraged a curious blend of anti-Christian and pagan metal with explicit pre-Colombian references. Mind you, we are talking about bands whose members are of indigenous ethnicity and/or half-breeds who apply a curious *Vererbung* (the inheritance principle that binds them to their fathers of past Mesoamerican civilizations) accompanied by explicit references to the *Tercer Reich*.



Two names stand out in particular: the now-defunct Ixtaukayotl and Kukulcan. Both developed a music genre that is purely ritualistic, where the component of electric aggression is smaller overall when compared to everything else, and the use of traditional instruments (or equivalent samples) and the preferential use of the native language guarantee an evocative

and genuinely original atmosphere. Speaking of Ixtaukayotl, we find their albums exude Mexican pride, with cover artwork that portrays no shortage of hooked decorations, pre-Columbian warriors bizarrely combined with Wehrmacht soldiers, anti-Christian insults and so on and so forth. This unprecedented mix of inorganic *mestizo*<sup>4</sup> is a real heresy invigorated by transoceanic collaborations, among which, a split with 1389 from the Balkans and one of the most famous Italian NSBM bands, Via Dolorosa, stands out. This is how the latter remember the evolution of the project, in the words of their leader V.O.N. Brahma FSS:



*«This is proof that the NSBM genre and its derivatives/siblings are now spread all over the world! The split album came about from a previous exchange with the guy from Ixtaukayotl, who's very active in his country... one thing led to another and we made this CD-R. The Bosnian band was added later at the request of the Mexican guy. A job out of the ordinary, at least from a geographical point of view. But from an attitude/ideological point of view it is all perfectly normal»<sup>5</sup>.*



When speaking of Kukulcan (named after the Mayan god depicted as a feathered serpent), we find that the real oddity is their markedly nationalist side-project, which is overwhelmingly Hitlerian on an iconographic level: Comando de Exterminio. Their debut demo in 2006, *Mexico Imperial*, boasts impetuous military metal hymns (*Las Armas Mexicanas*, *Raza Cosmica*,

etc.) including a rich paraphernalia of emblems and flags from the Third Reich. This deliberately provocative choice, guaranteed them a certain notoriety among the anti-Fascist organizations across the border.

Sticking to pure "Mexican NSBM", it is worth mentioning an indigenous label that has managed to stand out above all others: O.N.S.P. (Organizacion Nacional Socialista Pagana). Its roster includes the cream of the so-called raw National Socialist metal of



mestizo blood which, in addition to Kukulcan and Comando de Exterminio includes bands like Camaxtli, Nahual Eztlacuani, Sangre y Terror and War Command. Along this line of *honor mesoamericano* some labels, particularly sensitive to the cause of pre-Columbian identity, got a foothold, like E.A.N.M. (Elite Ancestral Nacionalista Mexicana).



These are not examples for NSBM purists, and despite some objective connivances with the scene, there is a balance between provocation and apology. What is predominant, however, is a fierce attachment to their own country, their own people: that *pueblo mexicano* praised with methods and choreographies that exist between the bizarre and the unorthodox. This vulgate of extreme and identitarian metal has chosen to use references (the aesthetics and the watchwords of Nazism) that are among the most abnormal imaginable in a place like Central America.



Looking backward, one could make a spontaneous thematic association with certain Latin American thrash bands of the Eighties, such as Holocaust from Brazil: *Campo de Exterminio*, their acclaimed album released in 1987, left an indelible mark among fans of the genre. However, it is fair to separate the feeble and contradictory aspirations of the bands mentioned above from what was pure exploitation of the Nazi phenomenon within the music scene. Holocaust were and remain a metal band with no particular political leanings but with a strong taste for provocation, and *Campo de Exterminio* is more of a theatrical representation of the horrors of Nazism, exorcised through an interpretation in music. Fifteen years later, for the reissue on CD, the label chose to revamp the brutal artwork prudently eliminating all the swastikas on the cover and worn by the band, adding a bilingual slip in which it is made clear, to avoid any misunderstanding, that the album does not in any way wish to celebrate the Nazi regime.

However, in South American countries like Brazil, Argentina and even Peru, openly NSBM projects arise and multiply throughout the hemisphere. Starting with Brazil, one of the best known names is that of Evil, a band that deserves to be considered for its fluctuating history. Among ups and downs (quite common with many other musicians devoted to extreme metal) we find several contradictions, including murder victims, typical of life within an environment where the situation can get out of hand.

In terms of discography, we are faced with an exorbitant amount of collaborations. The split albums involving Evil are numerous and quite varied, starting with the RAC oriented one with fellow countrymen Locomotive (with whom they share the tape titled *Blood and Honour*), and ending with the depressive black release with Lone Suffer from Japan (*We Bring the Gallows of Hope*, released in 2011). In

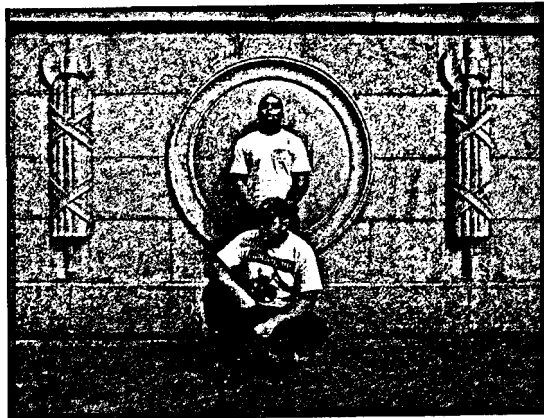


*Evil's frontman Warmaster*

the middle of these two collaborations there are a dozen more with bands like Celestia, Moonblood, Masochrist, Aryan Blood, White Diamond Death, Thallium, Lechia, Der Stürmer, Nacht und Nebel, Satanic Warmaster, Bilskirnir, Pantheon, and the list could go on. Skimming through these names, it is easy to see that more than half of them easily fall into the NSBM cauldron.

The band was formed by two friends, Warmaster and Black Goat of Darkness, but the latter would soon abandon metal to devote himself to the local neo-Nazi skinhead scene full-time, leaving everything in the hands of his comrade. In spite of this defection, Warmaster continued along a path between classic black metal and more than a few concessions to NSBM, at least until a couple of years ago, when an especially depressing event pushed him to distance himself from certain politics and to publish a sort of biography/official statement on his website, to clarify the position of Evil once and for all:

*«On a Sunday morning February 2000, I read the journal that Black Goat of Darkness was arrested to prison accused for murder an homosexual aside with some skinheads. I think it's important to make some things clear here. First of all, it was NOT a hate crime committed by an active Evil member, because he (Black Goat of Darkness) left the band and black metal scene 5 years before his prison [...]*



*Evil*



*One day before his prison, he was at my home and we talked about our old and good times and how our friendship had distanced themselves due his decision in became a skinhead. Although I respected his decision, our old comradeship has weakened. Black Goat of Darkness was sentenced to 20 years behind the bars. One year later, police raids at my house, confiscated my PC and some materials...»<sup>6</sup>.*

Accordingly, their affiliation to the Pagan Front was set aside, and Evil retraced their steps focusing on generally misanthropic and anti-human issues.

Speaking of music in the strict sense, one of the most compelling records that the Brazilians left as a legacy is also the most consistently related to NSBM, *Arktogäa* (2006), not surprisingly produced by the Greek label Totenkopf Propaganda. It is a CD focused on the theories of the Viennese ariosophe Guido von List, which specifically touches upon the theme of the ancient Arctic homeland of the Aryan people, all in accordance with occult Odinism as drawn up by the Austrian writer. The notes in the booklet are quite explicit:



*«This album is a contribution for the resurgence of an instinctive animal feeling, a collective unconscious embodied in the archetype of Wotanism and Ariosophy which was repressed in the last 2000 years by anti-life forces as Christianity, Marxism and capitalism»<sup>7</sup>.*

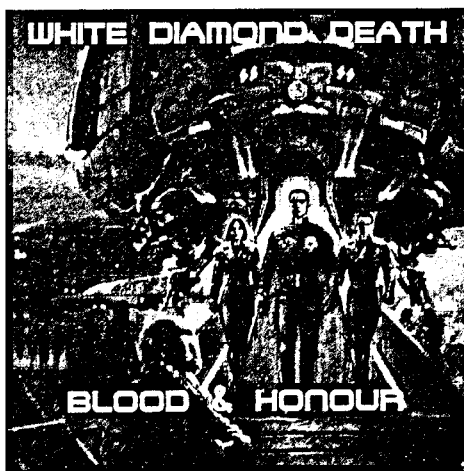
The album consists of six tracks, created thanks to the invaluable contribution of Widar, frontman of the well-known Teutonic band Bilskirnir, and is dedicated to Ulv Gegner Irminsson, the Russian musician among the founders of the extremist NSBM circle Blazebirth Hall, who was murdered in October 2005. These references and acquaintances do not leave much doubt re-

garding the possible ideological affiliation of Evil, and this apparently became too uncomfortable later on. But the long shadows of death never seem to have left the band: the former comrade Black Goat of Darkness died a couple of years later, in 2008, during his detention in a Brazilian prison. However, the information available was too meager and fragmentary to fully understand the event, even for Warmaster himself.

«[...] all I know and can comment about this sad happening is that he was found dead in prison due to cardiac failure in July 17 2008. He founded Evil with me and was a member during 1994 and 1996, beside his activities, he was the best brother I had and one of the most activist person I knew in my all life. 4 months before his death he asked me about the possibility of returning back in Evil after his release and I agreed with his proposal. For sure it will never happen in this life»<sup>8</sup>.

Brazil has given birth to other well-known names in the scene, bands like Nachtkult, Command and White Diamond Death. The first offer heavy caliber, raw and primitive black metal along the lines of their countrymen Seges Findere (another band behind a veritable deluge of anti-Christian/anti-Semitic hymns). To understand their sound, one should listen to the CD *Der Sieg des Stolzen Blutes* (2005), an album followed by controversy due to the collaboration with the American label Satanic Skinhead Propaganda. Command, a one-man band that is no longer active, left us only one album which came out in 2004, titled *Sturmangriff*, but that was enough to leave a mark. Born from the ashes of Resistência 88, their RAC past emerges in the simple Oi! structures of the songs, tinged with black metal and all the typical trimmings of National Socialist metal, such as historical samples, martial aesthetics and monothematic lyrics about pride and defense of the race. The end result is convincing enough to allow the band to debut for Totenkopf Propaganda, and finds them in the plethora of the bands affiliated with the Pagan Front.

White Diamond Death are a bit of a different story. In their own definition, they deliver primordial and chaotic "Nazi War Metal - NSBM Supreme Aryan". Although the band's releases have always had a printrun between meagre and almost non-existent, it is worth remembering that they ended up being mentioned in an unlikely "rock alphabet" published in the Brazilian edition of the men's magazine Maxim - more precisely, they appear under the letter X for xenophobia along with much more famous skinhead bands like No Remorse, Intimidation One and Radikahl.





Essentially, White Diamond Death are a one-man band, famous for their DIY productions and some excessive graphic aspects: some of the covers for their records are extremely kitsch, accompanied by several tribute cover songs of bands like Sarcófago, the above mentioned Evil, Graveland, and also Slayer, with their famous and controversial *Angel of Death*.

The debut EP of Hastur from Colombia has no mitigating circumstances: next to the poor arrangements of songs such as *The New*

*Dawn of Aryan Spirit* and *Aryan Blood* there is nothing less than a cover version of Manowar's *Hail and Kill*! Also, along the same lines of this peculiar interpretation of National Socialist black metal from Bogotá are Darkat, with a consolidated discography (four full-lengths already released, although in a very small editions) that revolve around hyper-saturated guitars and ambient digressions, that gladly give way to the usual samplings taken from the Nazi German past. The topics they cover, such as the Aryan race and the *völkisch* identity, seem of capital interest for Dead Emperor, the sole mind behind the project, so much so that they are recurring themes on albums like *Sorrowlands* (2008) and *Remembrance of Nekalah's Honor, The Cry of Fatherlands* (2009).

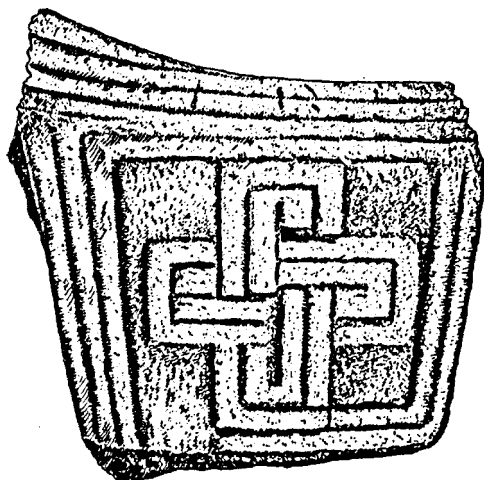
More generally, there have been countless solo projects by youngsters from every corner of South America that engage in a personal interpretation of NSBM. The results, however, are always far too modest and basic to be significant. There are many negligible names, which nevertheless are all the rage with every good distro specializing in both extreme and exotic metal: the Argentinian nationalists Viento Patagónico, the Brazilian RAC/NSBM combo Southern Aryan Response and, still in the same area, Lúgubre Eclipse, with their perverted *Adocicado e Enjoativo Aroma dos Corpos Cremados...* ("The sweet and sickly smell of burnt bodies..."), which includes a deathly cover artwork that depicts an image of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Moving our magnifying glass over that ancient land called Peru, we encounter the reckless experiments of Defrontis and Deathstorm88, whose demo *Hail Satanic Soldiers* opens with the unmistakable diptych *88/Judeofobia* and *Odio Total* and closes with the title track and a cover of Mayhem's *Ghoul*. While the band offers up that Nazi-satanic connection of which much has been said, they also mercilessly show how, in the absence of minimal musical skills, the genre often runs the risk of falling over itself, tangled in a vortex of excesses without purpose.

In this barren landscape in the shadow of the Andes, we also find room for Gateway of the Sun: the project, hailing from Arequipa, a metropolis also known as La Ciudad Blanca ("the white city"), is yet another one-man band that released a handful of poor productions on tape and CD-R. They have had a certain resonance mainly for being a geographical oddity rather than for the actual sound quality. Musically speaking, the end results of Gateway of the Sun rarely reach sufficiency, taking into account the heavy use of low quality synthesized samples and unnerving "Nintendo metal" elements that end up sounding like an involuntary rock experiment for 8-bit video games, thus encouraging feelings of ill-concealed hilarity. It is curious to note that after the cocky debut EP titled *Aryan Spirit! Aryan Pride!*, the aesthetic excesses waned with time, and the swastikas and Celtic crosses found in the artwork lost consistency until they disappeared altogether. The lyrics, written in a poor and trivial English and praising the purity of the Aryan race, complete the circle on a release that is inevitably doomed to oblivion.

All in all, Gateway of the Sun are not even the worst example of Peruvian National Socialist metal, taking into account far more outlandish and improbable attempts - like the pure Nazi exploitation of bands along the lines of Nazgul SS from Guatemala, a typical example of a totalitarian circus where anything goes in the name of confused provocation at all costs.

Even Chile, in spite of a quite active and varied extreme metal scene, cannot boast an equally large NSBM roster, despite being the nation that gave birth to one of the most famous figures of occult National Socialism: Miguel Serrano. For the record, we must mention Giboraltar, who took a cue from Serrano's esoteric theories for the release of their only album, *Lichtgeburt*: seventeen minutes of classic black metal that does not forget the lesson of the prodigies of the genre and knows how to weave rough guitar textures through sporadic openings and bare melodies. The record is not momentous, but it still manages to capture the listener's attention, especially when it dissolves into slow atmospheric passages, such as *At the Gates of the Blazing Sudpolar Circle* and *In the Trance of the Green Path and the Other Light*. In the chaos of tattered amateur productions and proclamations that exceed the extreme to fall into the category of grotesque, this album - thanks to a layout with attention to every detail - stands out for the sobriety with which it approaches these kind of themes when compared to most South American releases.



In general, it is reasonable to consider that the real nerve center of NSBM in South America has its geographical reference in Argentina. The so-called Southern Elite Circle was born in the late Nineties, in the capital Buenos Aires. This veritable group devotes itself to National Socialist metal and revolves around the record label Dark Hidden Productions, owned by a member of this bunch of dissidents. When trying to focus on the Argentinian reality, a useful starting point is the collection entitled *Southern Elite Circle Compilation*, produced for the tenth anniversary of the eponymous circle, which features over seventy minutes of audio material and an extensive booklet with a complete biography of the movement.

The key figures of this scene can be identified in two main characters: Eviigne and Narok. The first is the mastermind of several projects that range between misanthropic and anti-social, bands like the forerunners of the local black metal scene, Permafrost, the contentious Nachtgeblüt, and the ultra-politicized Campo de Mayo. The name of the latter is chosen as a tribute to the military base in which, during the years of the Guerra Sucia ("dirty war") between 1976 and 1983, concentration camps were set up according to the directives of the military board led by President Jorge Rafael Videla.

Campo de Mayo is remembered for being one of the few bands explicitly devoted to uncompromising, anti-Communist black metal: originally this form of opposition to the post-military dictatorship of the Argentinian government was somewhat mitigated, almost an implicit and harmless provocation, but soon Eviigne decided to kick anyone who failed to show the necessary anti-Marxist determination out of the band, then proceeded to record several clandestine albums against the current laws that prevent the publication of apologetic material in favour of the past military board.

Therefore, between February and December 2004, we find the trilogy made up of *Renewing the Call for War*, the high-sounding *Playing with Toys that Would Have Been Dangerous even for Plato's Republic* and the celebratory apotheosis of the regime titled *Himno a Jorge Rafael Videla* seeing the light. This series of EPs was secretly manufactured in a few dozen copies by Dark Hidden Productions, since none of the local print shops would have ever agreed to produce such improper, as well as patently illegal material. In Eviigne's words, these illicit CD-Rs are «...all hailing the war victoriously raised by the Argentinian Army against Communism during the bloody years 1976-83 and daring all the Left-wing lies about it that formed a false official history in which the red and Marxist terrorists are saints unjustly killed by a criminal States».

In August 2005, the frontman of Campo de Mayo was received by General Jorge Rafael Videla and his wife in the apartment where the couple was under house arrest. On that occasion, Eviigne delivered a copy of the ultra-limited EP recorded in his honor directly into the hands of the former Argentinian president. The following year, a consortium of labels (Dark Hidden, assisted by Desastrious Records and Fetch the Rope Records) released a CD anthology containing the three works mentioned above accompanied by yet another caustic slogan clearly printed on the back cover: «*Campo de Mayo totally supports the merciless killing of communists*». Even a simple browse through the

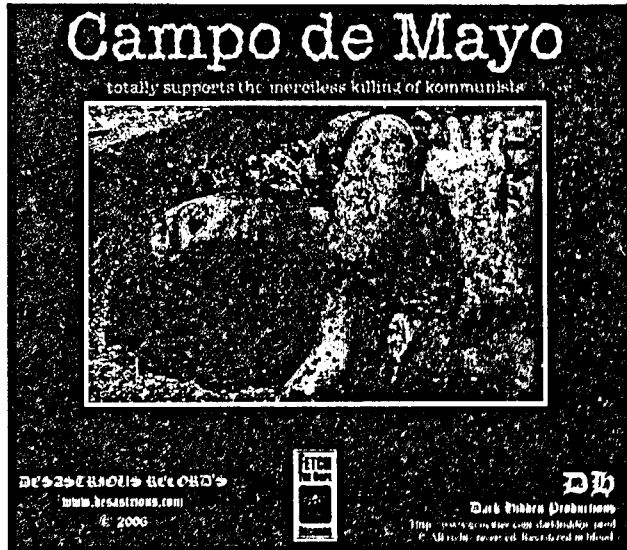
song titles clarifies the declaration of war addressed to the opponents of the bloody military dictatorship: songs like *Past Proud Bloody Nights of Argentine* (celebrating the armed repression of the opponents), *30.000 - 0* (30.000 are the officially estimated victims of the regime during the years of the Guerra Sucia) or *Suárez Division Mason* (dedicated to General Guillermo Suárez Mason, convicted of crimes against humanity) do not require further comments.

Looking back to the Southern Elite Circle, we find the other leading figure of the scene is the one who hides behind the pseudonym of Narok. On one hand, we owe him credit for the production and distribution of many of the releases of the movement through Dark Hidden Productions, on the other, Narok himself contributed to the spreading of politically extreme ideas through yet another music project dedicated to Nazi propaganda: *Furor*. As in the case of *Campo de Mayo*, this one-man band makes no mystery of its background or ideology:

*«Furor introduces us into a lyrical world inspired by National Socialism, pride and war, and a music in the vein of Burzum, Gorgoroth, and the Blazebirth Hall bands, a raw sound, hidden harmonies behind an obscure mantle. Narok, activist and militant of many NS organizations in Argentina, follows the way of art as another means of diffusion of the supreme idea»<sup>10</sup>.*

The official affiliation of the Southern Elite Circle to the Pagan Front ensures proper credentials within the NSBM community and elevates this circle from Buenos Aires among the prominent movements throughout Latin America with regard to National Socialist black metal.

However, there is an NSBM scene outside the Southern Elite Circle, made up of a handful of bands who have always remained devoted to the Nazi cause, although they do not converge in an actual organization. This is the case with *Aesir*, formed in 2007, who debuted with *Final Holocaust*, distributed by White Distribution. This first work is their only one to use the English language, as the following project completely embraced Argentinian cultural heritage, thus deciding to use only the mother tongue





Some of the tapes released by ArgenReich Records (from left to right: Aesir, Rafnagud and Aryanhorde)

for titles and lyrics. The result is an exotic and bizarre encounter of pagan and racial thought of the traditional Nordic sort, transferred to the southern latitudes. Aesir is the advocate of a type of black metal that is at times effective, but never too chaotic and inspired by the Norwegian sound. The group managed to settle with the Polish label Werewolf Promotion, that released two of its best-known albums, the retrospective *El Llamado de Nuestra Sangre* and *La Estirpe del Sol Vuelve a Resurgir*.

Uriburu are also part of the Argentinian National Socialist black metal scene. Their name comes from the dictator José Félix Uriburu, who briefly led the country following a coup d'état led by himself at the end of 1930. Although he is a minor character, at least in terms of international fame, it is clear from the name they chose that the Argentinian band owes a lot to the figure of the former dictator<sup>11</sup>: besides the political stance, it is probably his past in the German army in the early years of the twentieth century that ensures the band that indispensable connection to Europe and its past. It should be said that, in most cases, the members of South American NSBM bands have - or boast - an ancient European lineage, a line of blood that is used as a flag and heralded with pride. This is obviously a "necessary and sufficient" condition, so that the entire National Socialist ideological structure (which, as mentioned above, is often aesthetically far more extreme than that of the counterparts in the Old Continent) does not fall like a house of cards with the first gust of wind; an NSBM band formed by "impure" elements, to put it in their own words, would indeed be helpless in the face of the most obvious criticism: the inconsistency between their place of origin and the ideas they promote.

Returning to Uriburu, their music career is comparatively small on the releases front. A very raw demo, *Picaña* (2007), stands out mainly for the cover: a photograph of the ruins of the AMIA (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina) building, the target

of a terrorist attack on July 18, 1994<sup>12</sup>. A second, more elaborate tape titled *Dictatorhsip* (2010), released on ArgenReich Records, shows no obvious signs of musical evolution, and was noticed for a handful of songs and the usual themes more than anything else: *Marxist-menace*, *The Swastika Enlightens Our Path* and *For a Fascist Argentina*. Yet, in spite of these two less than memorable releases, their cacophonous and basic black metal found a way to cross the Argentinian border through the well-established practice of the split album. The last in order of time, *United by Blood*, *Gathered by Iron* released in 2011, finds them alongside a large group of known and less known ensembles

- Holocaustus from Germany, Stürm Kommand from Bulgaria, Endlösung from Russia and the hyperactive Italians Via Dolorosa - each participating with a song, confirming the growing degree of cooperation that has established itself within a scene that was far more fragmented worldwide. The previous split was even more substantial: released in 2008 with the title *BulgAryan - Southern Radikal War Propaganda*, in the company of Stürm Kommand and 88 - representing Bulgaria - and the crazy Brazilians Ravendark's Monarchal Canticle (authors of countless split albums and songs with absurd titles like *Ativismo Bioterrorista* and *Anti-Humanismo Pátrio*). Here Uriburu, under the guidance of MalevuluSS and JewSSlaughter, participate with five tracks devoted to utter chaos and marred by disastrous production that makes the whole thing almost inaudible, with shapeless guitars, and drums reduced to a distorted pulse that plagues the listener for the duration of the songs. This musical intransigence is bizarrely echoed in the phrase that accompanies the band info in the booklet: «*Contact: only available for the true elite, the rest... you will not be called!*», epitomizing a "true" to the core attitude that inevitably turns into a farce.



The work of the one-man band VII Batallón de la Muerte is of much more depth, both for the number of albums released and better writing skills. Although it is a project orbiting in the NSBM galaxy (having participated, via a "third party" to the *Southern Elite Circle Compilation*<sup>13</sup>), the total lack of racial claims or explicit references to Nazism puts the band's work at the edge of the genre. When explicitly asked whether his project can be considered part of the NSBM scene, the band's leader says:



«No, because I usually speak about the restoration of the former and legendary values from my Fatherland. Almost all the lyrics are related to the old times before the 20th Century and others to the present. And that is one of the reasons why I simply defined it as "Elitist Nationalist Black Metal". [...] You actually know that the real patriotism and nationalism have the same mutual feeling. So if VII Batallón de la Muerte is listened by true patriots, I will be grateful for that»<sup>14</sup>.

No National Socialism then, but rather a nationalism that does not rely on the teachings of foreign political doctrines, and focuses solely on the legacy of its own history. This patriotic inclination is decidedly adherent to the explicit dictates of the Right, a political profile from which Der Henker, master and father of the battalion of death, does not seem to want to distance himself.

Since its founding in 2007, the VII Batallón de la Muerte have released two fairly good full-lengths, the inevitable split album (with fellow associates Argentum) and a couple of singles, all musically interesting and meticulously refined in terms of graphics. Actually, the debut album, *La Restauración*, seemed to be in that martial-industrial vein that points to Puissance, Triarii and such as the most obvious points of reference, but the musical direction of this first work seems to be self-imposed due to contingent factors that are not quite clear, and the musician himself emphasizes how «There will not be more albums like *La Restauración* because I recorded it when I was limited to create instrumental and martial songs»<sup>15</sup>.



turn of *Orden Nacional*, the single which shows the first signs of a style in the making and already anticipates further developments: abandoning, or rather reducing, the excessive use of synthesizers and free from the constraints of re-interpreting other people's songs,

In fact, the following promo *Der Große Tod*, marked a sharp change of course: the disc consists of only three tracks, with the peculiarity of being cover versions of Absurd songs, a band for which Der Henker has great admiration. *Tod Vor Sonnenaufgang*, *Mourning Soul*, and *Kriegertod* are the songs through which this tribute takes shape, all rather faithful reinterpretations of the originals with the sole addition of a slight symphonic tone - a likely legacy of the previous work and also a characteristic of later productions. A year later, it is the

the seventh battalion of death combines an undeniable martial touch (the two tracks have clean vocals) with a layer of guitars that are far from the extremisms of black metal.

The zenith of this slow process of metamorphosis comes with the full-length *El Libertador*, released in 2012 after some delays, via the Portuguese label Frenteuropa Records. The cover reproduces a portrait of José de San Martín<sup>16</sup>, an essential historical character that is honored as the Father of the Nation in Argentina and whose saga serves as the main topic of the album. The record opens with the notes of the national anthem and then converges with an alchemy of black metal, symphonic music, military marches and war hymns that have become the band's trademark, while the last songs are two new Absurd covers (*Werwolf* and *Ashes to Ashes*) before the inevitable martial outro.



Despite the fluctuating level and meager fortunes of the South American productions, new bands from the Southern hemisphere are following the lead of Argentina and in the wake of white pride claims and hymns celebrating Hitler's Reich, they show how even here the NSBM phenomenon does not seem willing to slow down its onslaught. The obvious technical limitations and primitive black metal of many - perhaps too many - of the bands described are somewhat balanced by excesses of all kinds, with graphics and invectives filled with violent racism, inhuman degradation and genocides. The result is an unusual visual jumble, exacerbated by a discernible state of isolation faced by most of these bands.

Spanish and Portuguese National Socialist black metal stands out for its unique distinctive trait, mixing tropical climate exoticism with the never silenced shadows of past regimes, both local and imported. But we must consider that, in spite of the multitude of followers of Nazism who took refuge in South America after the war (a factor that seems to have played a marginal role in the spreading of the genre in those lands), the native NSBM horde proves to be less than compatible with the cause. The scene that arose at these latitudes displays, except in some rare cases, coarse vulgarity, along with crude and childish excesses: too many unforgivable oversights relegate it to a corner, and in the eyes of the rest of the world its representatives end up giving the impression of yearning, without any right, for a utopia of which they would like to be the legitimate heirs.

## Notes:

1 - From the film *The Boys from Brazil*, 1978.

2 - The band's debut album is also worth a brief mention, a work that is grotesque both in the title, *The Call of the Anti-Semitic Troops*, and the bizarre artwork: a home-made drawing depicting the great Lovecraftian Cthulhu devouring a rabbi, against the backdrop of a half-destroyed synagogue.

3 - The reference is of course to the infamous O.D.E.S.S.A. (Organisation der ehemaligen SS-Angehörigen),



## RAZA BLANCA, ORGULLO BLANCO

a clandestine network set up by ex-SS officers - and then supported by a series of complacent institutions and sympathizers scattered in the four corners of the globe - with the aim of allowing the Reich hierarchs to escape, most of whom took refuge in Latin America.

4 - This term indicates the individuals of mixed blood born from the crossing of European peoples with indigenous ones. The concept of mestizo takes on a particular identitarian significance in Mexico, where it is related to a specific culture deriving from European and indigenous peoples of the Americas, but it has its own strong and peculiar independence and originality.

5 - Via Dolorosa, interview with the authors, October 2011.

6 - Excerpt from the biography published on the band's official website (<http://www.evil-legions.com/>).

7 - Excerpt from the booklet of the album *Arktogāa* (2006).

8 - Evil, from Ghost Kommand n.4, summer 2009.

9 - Campo de Mayo, from the liner notes on the booklet of the eponymous CD that contains the EP trilogy we mentioned (2006).

10 - Furor, from the liner notes in the booklet of the CD anthology *Southern Elite Circle Compilation* (2007).

11 - Their first demo contains a song called *Heil Uriburu*, and in the last track it is possible to hear a sample that says: «*Respondiendo al clamor del pueblo y con el patriótico apoyo del ejército y de la Armada, hemos asumido el Gobierno de la Nación*» ("In response to the clamor of the people and with the patriotic support of the army and the navy, we have taken on the government of the nation"). It is the incipit of the official speech held by General Uriburu in the aftermath of the coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of Hipólito Yrigoyen.

12 - The explosion, which claimed 85 victims and hundreds of injuries, is still the most serious terrorist act ever committed on Argentinian soil.

13 - The song by Argentum included in the compilation *La Tierra Blanca*, was actually written by Der Henker when he still did not have a music project, and the track was given to Argentum who used it for the *Southern Elite Circle Compilation*. A new version of the same song is on the album *El Libertador* (2012) by VII Batallón de la Muerte.

14 - VII Batallón de la Muerte, from Wegwisir (<http://wegwisir.blogspot.com>), June 2010.

15 - Ibid.

16 - Argentinian general who, after studying in Madrid and undertaking his military career in Spain, married the cause of Latin American independence fighting against the Iberian troops first in Argentina, then in Chile and Peru, convinced that the only way to escape the yoke of the old colonial power was to free the territory of Peru, the location of the Spanish viceregal power in South America.

## Borderline reality

«DE GUSTIBUS NON EST DISPUTANDUM»<sup>1</sup>

[ANCIENT PROVERB]

**W**hat happens when the seed of NSBM takes root in improbable contexts and takes shapes so inconceivable, if not abstruse, that even the most experienced lover of the underground becomes unsettled? The ramifications that we have discussed in the previous chapters have cast long shadows that spawned an amazing progeny, and in these pages we will take a look at the extreme of the extreme.

If you think that the Nazi-inspired, pre-Columbian halo of Mexican metal bands such as Ixtaukayotl, Kukulcan, Camaxtli, Tlateotocani or Comando de Exterminio have exhausted the surprises of a geographical nature, think again. Several people wondered about the National Socialist turn (contemplative or simply provocative?) of a band like Aglare Light, who chose a cumbersome title for their second demo, the motto *Blood and Honour*: military attitude, war-like nature, the usual excerpts of Hitler's speeches... ordinary execution when it comes to NSBM, except that Aglare Light is a Chinese one-man band, from the distant province of Sichuan!



The Far East is a harbinger of several small follies, and it is enough to carefully explore Southeast Asia to stumble upon the surprising progeny of the Darah & Maruah (Malaysian equivalent and exact translation of Blood & Honour), a sort of National Socialist metal circle formed a couple of years ago in the State of Selangor. One of the first signs of life of this unique army of Malay power arose in 2009 with the release of a self-produced anthology titled *Petaling Jaya Nationalist Attack Metal*. The most relevant names fully draw from European NSBM, but distort it for their own use in an orgy of studs, swastikas, ripped jeans and Roman salutes. Therefore we are faced with the blatantly Nazi black/thrash metal of bands such as Vetis, Wraith, Santau

and Barthafah, but also with peculiar native pagan metal digressions, as in the case of Singhasari and Antaboga, who like to call their genre "national romantic Nusantara pagan folk metal"<sup>2</sup>.

In accordance with the manifested closeness between the National Socialist metal scene and the skinhead scene, the Malaysian variant of Blood & Honour also includes bands born out of the hybridization of these movements, such as Maruah: a skinhead metal combo where the nationalist RAC of the Strait of Malacca is accompanied by subversive classic metal riffs. This youthful reality, still fresh and booming, will certainly deliver other disturbing and unsettling surprises in the future, under the banner of Kuasa Melayu ("Malay power").

Without wanting to persist in such excesses, taking a few steps back (and moving a few thousand kilometers), we come across the recording legacy of Osttruppen 812 from Armenia, proud bearers of NSBM that is fiercely anti-Ottoman, opting for compelling and evocative metal devoid of the technical limitation typical of the genre. The chosen moniker reflects their explicit homage to the Armenische Legion, the



*Malaysian Vetis live on stage*

name given to the 812 Armenian battalion under the leadership of the German army in the crusade against Bolshevism during the Second World War. This is not even an isolated case, since mid-2000 in the same caucasian country, we find the renowned Rahvira, authors of basic black metal but still worthy of consideration in exquisitely musical terms. Among indigenous mythology and swastikas in abundance, they have churned out

an aggressive sequence of albums of proud NSBM celebrating Eurasian supremacy.

Continuing southward we encounter the paradoxical Acheron Gates, from Haifa, Israel, who were active in the early Nineties. In this specific case we can not talk about NSBM, both because the genre was not yet sanctioned, and because the actual conditions do not exist for a philosophy that would be suicidal if advocated by an Israeli band. However, their last tape *Forests of Dark Mayhem* (1993) boasts titles that are dangerously balanced between the genuinely provocative and the absurd, like *Burning Jerusalem, After the Nuclear Holocaust Pt8/Fascistic Black Metal* or *A.T.N.H. Euronymus, I Dance on Your Grave* (with a special thanks, presumably unrequited, to «Count Grishnackh & Burzom»<sup>3</sup>. What at the time, might have seemed like mere jumping on the bandwagon of the verbal excesses of a niche genre, is a bizarre and completely unique episode if it is reviewed today, dangerously close to a self-destructive ideological short circuit.

In spite of the location of the various NSBM (or para-NSBM) projects called into question, it must be said that many other bands co-opted within the same stylistic and ideological enclosure do not always give priority to the doctrine of the Third Reich, rather preferring other forms of discrimination and contextualizing their contempt for other races in historical periods such as, the epic history of the Confederate American



*Barthafab's logo, authors of the demo  
Sacrifice for National Socialist (2012)*

States for example. Such is the case of the resolute racist and slave-driving black metal of Slave Whipping Blasphemy, starting with the highly offensive demo called *Niggerbitch 666* (2000) with lyrics that continuously spew invectives and jeers at the expense of African-American people (just think of the opening track: *The Kotton Kries for Nigger Blood*). All the music paraphernalia of Slave Whipping Blasphemy rails against the peoples of African descent, while clear references to the Ku Klux Klan (which was a movement of deeply Christian imprint) are easily altered to support racist and supremacist Satanism. Songs like *Abraham Lincoln I Fucking Hate You* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin in Flames* will not make the history of the genre, but give a good idea of what this band from south of the Mason-Dixon line has to offer.

Some people, perhaps tired of waging war against Christians, Jews and assorted racial minorities, choose to direct their hatred towards a "niche" reality, taking less traveled paths. In this sense, Islam is the new cardinal nemesis to hate and fight, and opens brand new scenarios favorable to the proliferation of blasphemy in metal. Something similar has already been seen with Finland's Devilry and their *Muslim Genocide*, as well as other imitators that really have little to do with NSBM<sup>4</sup>, but there is a veritable legion of anti-Islamic black metal bands from the Middle East (Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, even from the archipelago of Bahrain) whose work is not widely known in the West but has been causing a stir and gathering followers in recent years, so much so, that in the future this unique network of the desert could even earn a separate chapter. We are talking about bands like Seeds of Iblis, Janaza, Tadness, Mosque of Satan and False Allah, to name a few; bearers of an embryonic phenomenon, but still an inevitable sign of the times. It is noteworthy that the traditional inflexibility of the Islamic world suffers from a growing phenomenon of virulent opposition from its own youth, similar to what happened years ago to Christianity in Europe.

But none of these newborn indigenous bands can boast tacky credentials equal to New York's Taghut, a band born from the ashes of several previous incarnations with rather disgraceful names (first 666, then Branded 666, and finally Taghut).



According to Islamic theology, the meaning of their moniker can be interpreted as "impure" or "rebellious", and in deference to the total lack of respect towards all types of monotheism the title of their first (and so far only) album could only be: *Ejaculate Upon Holy Qur'an* (2008). The chosen artwork is up to the task, with a picture depicting the cover of a copy of the Koran smeared with what could be semen - or, more likely, ordinary liquid soap. In the end, we have a very bad example of typical black metal, cheesy and lacking any mo-

mentum. The songs alternate seamlessly, all extremely weak and elementary, and the only aspects that openly refer to the NSBM scene are offered by a keyboard intro filled with an unlikely series of "Sieg Heil!", and the vicissitudes of adolescent-sounding tracks such as *Fascist Regime* and *The Arrogant Jews*. The liner notes of *Ejaculate Upon the Holy Qur'an* include dutiful greetings to the Pagan Front, although it is doubtful that the latter have ever reciprocated the gesture of esteem.

From black metal we move into much more melodic and catchy sonic territories, because we can not avoid mentioning a band like Battlecry. From mid-2000, this American duo, devoted to Yankee white nationalism, has managed to cause a stir with a series of albums of classic heavy metal. Richard "Spartan" Stewart and David John stand out due to a curious blend of Eighties metal and the doctrinal canons of organizations like the National Alliance and suchlike. Basically, Iron Maiden, Judas Priest and Dio for the music, Adolf Hitler, David Duke and William Pierce for the ideas. A formula that seems to have gotten a peculiar form of approval of its own, although the actual following of the band is difficult to quantify.

Where extreme metal turns into shapeless and inhuman cacophony, we find a proliferation of noise projects which, while holding tight to the themes traditionally pertinent to NSBM (war, racism, Nazism, white separatism, etc.), decide to negate the musical aspect of it all with violent electronic and industrial elements pushed to the conceivable limit. A real musical slaughter where there are no more rules and white noise is the master - intended as an irregular sound of constant amplitude across the entire spectrum of its frequencies - with a magma of piercing sonic impact ready to put the nervous system of any listener to the test.

An example of this interesting link between NSBM and noise experimentation is offered by labels such as the American Winter Solace.

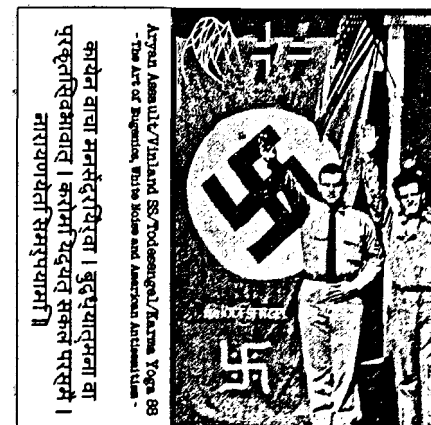
«Bands like *Aryan Kommando 88*, *Nachtkult*, *Flammentod*, *PD SS Totenkopf* along with many others shouting lyrics of racial hatred, anti-Semitism and National Socialism found a home under the banner of Winter Solace. Their message is illegal in many European countries. Winter Solace releases of this kind have been seized by German authorities, seized by foreign customs and have alienated us from the underground black metal scene»<sup>5</sup>.

Reading these few lines, one might expect nothing more than yet another record company devoted to the cause of NSBM radicalism. Instead, while carefully perusing the catalog of material offered by this label from Minnesota, one immediately notices the dominance of electronic-avantgarde that rages through a profusion of titles and original productions.

Here, black metal goes hand in hand with projects that it would be an understatement to label as bizarre. Some examples: Hate Ejaculation (National Socialist satanic ambient from the Czech Republic), Cosmic Weapon of Thule (Nazi EBM trance influenced by dark-wave, from Germany), Hitlerismo Esotérico (Chilean Nazi ambient), Ilsa Koch (U.S. National Socialist noisecore), Avanti! (techno-Fascism made in Italy) and Karma Yoga 88 (Indo-Aryan ritual music under the star spangled banner). We cannot put aside albums such as *To Make Explode Inside Aryan Woman* or *Come Aryan Rape Incest Before Race Mix*, both by a dark Uruguayan character who calls himself NaziSSexNoise and describes his style as "Aryan sexology music". Reading the statements of the label that has released both his tapes (the controversial Thule Society, a subsidiary of Winter Solace), it would seem that, at the time, Mr. NaziSSexNoise was locked up in the country's prisons for unspecified crimes of a sexual nature.

Particular attention is given to the "techno National Socialist" scene, which is rather prosperous (although qualitatively primitive to say the least) if we take into account such projects such as *Aryan Assault*, *Panzersöldaten*, *Nacht der Sunwheel*, *JewcruSSh* or the seminal Nazi Eurodance by Lebensborn (who also released a split album called *Slavonic Resistance* together with the mysterious Comrade Borislav 88)<sup>6</sup>.

«*Aria bito no seishin-sei Zettai ni nai komodo ya Yudaya hitonotame!*» ("Aryan spirituality, absolutely forbidden to children and Jews!") is, on the other hand, the absurd and extravagant motto that peremptorily stands on the booklet of the tape *Nazi Pervert GoGo Five* by the Japanese group National Socialist Ninja, one of the most bizarre and totally inconceivable projects ever created within the international circle falling under the National Socialist ideal.



One of Winter Solace's many productions: the split between *Aryan Assault*, *Vinland SS*, *Todesengel* and *Karma Yoga 88*.

In case anyone is wondering what kind of actual connection there is between the techno Nazi ninja and old school NSBM, the answer is simple: in February 2012, Winter Solace released a split tape between National Socialist Ninja and Vinland SS10, with the emblematic title *Occupy NSBM!*, a work of

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*Engine of Our Renewal* followed by a minimalist version of the famous song *Straight Edge* by the American Minor Threat (a band that is worlds apart from the extreme Right).

Violators are warned: these new guardians of National Socialist musical rebellion seem determined to enforce their vision of underground justice. We wonder if they will spoil the sleep of the "impure" or just destroy their ears...

## Notes:

1 - "There is no disputing of tastes".

2 - The Indonesian word Nusantara stands for the South East Asian archipelago.

3 - Typos aside, the relationship between Norway and Israel holds other surprises. If Acheron Gates thanked Vikernes, then Salem, pioneers of Middle Eastern extreme metal, had an entirely different experience. According to what drummer Nir Nakav explained in the documentary *Global Metal* (2007) by Scot McFadyen and Sam Dunn, one of their demos fell into the hands of Vikernes who did not like the lyrics of *Millions Slaughtered*, focused on the tragedy of the Jewish persecution. Vikernes wrote a letter with less than friendly tones in which he said he appreciated the music but not the lyrics, regretting the fact that Hitler had not finished the job and hoping that Saddam Hussein could "remedy" this (it was the beginning of the first Gulf War). The band replied accordingly to the Norwegian musician, with a far from kind letter. A couple of months later, Salem were contacted by the police who informed them that they had identified a parcel bomb addressed to them from Norway.

4 - One for all: U.S. death metallers Infidel, mostly for an album they released a few years ago titled *Destruction of Mecca* (2008).

5 - From the biographical notes on Winter Solace's official website ([www.wintersolaceproductions.com](http://www.wintersolaceproductions.com)).

6 - Lebensborn should also be remembered as the first instigator of the politically incorrect Belarusian record company Nazi Propaganda, a small but fierce label housed in the remote town of Rechytsa, which debuted with the eponymous demo by these murderers of the dancefloor. For several years Nazi Propaganda boasted a roster of exquisite works on cassette produced for bands that lay between the disturbing and the inconceivable, like Panzerterror SS, Kingdom of Asgard, Pogromnacht, Antijew\$, Vinland SS and Blackmoon Warrior 88. And there is also the noise NSBM one-man band Totenkopf Kommando, who released some tapes of old, raw ideological black metal dating back to the mid-Nineties, such as *We Are the NSBM* (1994) and *Fight for the Sign of the Swastika* (1996).

7 - Super Sentai, or "super teams", is the term used to define a specific Japanese television genre conceived around the mid-Seventies. The defining factor of the Super Sentai is in the presence of a group of multicolored warriors who fight to defend peace from dark extraterrestrial or demonic forces. From this format came the famous Westernized series called Power Rangers.

8 - Although the Japanese term Hentai refers to the idea of manifest sexual perversion, in the West it is generally associated with anime and manga intended for an adult audience due to the sexually explicit content.

9 - Not surprisingly, the announced and upcoming CD anthology containing these first three tapes will be titled *Heil Hitler Kitty*.

10 - Contracted form of Vinland Special Services, this is the power-electronics solo project of Doug McQuerter, the owner of Winter Solace.



FOLLOW YOUR  
LEADER

# The Red and the Black

## Red & Anarchist Black Metal Vs. National Socialist Black Metal

«...WE ARE LOOKING TO PRESERVE THE SPIRIT OF THAT ANARCHIST PUNK SCENE AS WELL AS MAKE OUR OWN CONTRIBUTION TO THE MOVEMENT. THAT IS HOW WE SHOW OUR RESPECT. AT THE SAME TIME WE CAN'T DENY OUR METAL ROOTS. WE ALL LISTENED TO METAL SINCE WE WERE VERY YOUNG. I SEE METAL AS BEING CONNECTED TO THE WORKING CLASS»<sup>1</sup>.

[ISKRA]

**I**f NSBM has never failed to unleash a rich series of disputes and controversies within the metal community, its nemesis par excellence has done nothing less. We are referring to that young but promising music genre that, in recent years, has grown under the acronym RABM, or Red & Anarchist Black Metal. A small collective, spread here and there across the globe, which started to be talked about at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

To this day, this scene can be considered in its embryonic stage, given that the reference bands can be counted on one hand and - for the moment - there are still no organic declarations of intent designed to characterize or define the phenomenon in some way, except for a sort of "manifesto" that appeared on the popular social network Facebook:

*«First of all, let's be clear. If you don't like politics in black metal go to the fucking NSBM/Nazi/white supremacists scum and bitch at them. Because while you bitch about Left-wing bands, many of you are tolerant with the intolerance of NSBM. Metal is about freedom, any metal. NSBM is about oppression. As long as there are scum using this music to call for the oppression of others, there will always be those who fight back. So don't be ungrateful and don't come and bitch to those who are fighting for your freedom and against racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. [...] RABM is not a black metal subgenre. It's a movement that is standing up against the mentally herd of Right-wing ideologies and NSBM that is not a subgenre either but a far Right-wing bullshit racist/Nazi retard movement»<sup>2</sup>.*

RABM expresses itself in a much more malleable way compared to its natural antagonist. When trying to understand the whys and wherefores, one of the most interesting and somehow paradigmatic bands of this novel stepson of contemporary black metal can come to our aid: Iskra from Canada. Like Der Stürmer, they also owe their

name to a propaganda paper published in Germany at the beginning of the last century, but in this case, Iskra was the organ of information for the Russian socialist emigrants and it addressed the Bolshevik fringes to support what would be remembered as the October Revolution. The name means "spark", and is taken from a phrase found in the correspondence between two nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals, Odoevskij and Puškin: «*From a spark a fire will break out*». However, the already slight similarities with the Greek band end there. If NSBM does not mind RAC, considering it as a hybrid genre and a companion, RABM turns to Anarcho-punk and, more specifically, crust (an evolution of punk that nods to a crossover with metal). Speaking then of Iskra and the inevitable imitators, it is clear that their ideological roots sink in this politicized and violently anti-authoritarian sound, but turned to black metal, according to a very personal style. Unlike NSBM, black metal cannot be considered the point of origin, and if anything, it is a point of arrival or a turning point - better yet: a tool, or an additional recruitment weapon.



*Iskra's eponymous debut album (2004)*

*«Some people see it as contradictory for Iskra to be listening to black metal, and on the surface it may seem so. But we are strong in our beliefs, enough to be able to listen to anything and be critical. There is the old maxim: "Know thy enemy", or: "Keep your friends close but your enemy closer". You might also see it as a type of subversion rather than support.*

*Many black metal fans get angry when they hear us being called black metal. [...] On another level, what if some kids, who love black metal, appreciate our efforts? It could be a turning point to a more positive and active outlook. I've met some pretty stoked metalheads on tour; stoked that there is a metal band with something to say. This is a common thing for us. So we've moved beyond the "punk ghetto", as some people like to call it. At least to some extent. Perhaps we've been somewhat successful in inviting more people to participate in a revolutionary culture»<sup>3</sup>.*

Their self-titled debut album (released in 2004) is an ideal compendium of everything that should be defined as RABM. The vinyl grooves contain eleven earthquakes of blackened crust, ten original tracks and a cover of the famous anti-war anthem written by Bob Dylan in the early Sixties, *Masters of War*. Topics essentially include, the demand for civil rights, violated freedom, the oppression of the capitalist

system; racism, pacifism, colonialism, environmentalism, and gay marriage... all in the libertarian and revolutionary perspective of a community based on antagonistic doctrines and experiences. The obviously politicized lyrics, boast contents worth examining. Just to give you an idea, here is an extract taken from the track *Threat Inflation*:

*«The United Snakes of Amerikkka and their dwindling alliance  
Are the real masters and distributors of mass destructive weapons  
With their lapdog media, they'll rain a storm of lies  
The world's leading terrorist state, no retribution for their crimes*

*Public opposition 80% in Spain and Italy  
Regardless of state allegiance, people thinking for themselves  
Public opposition 90% in Britain and Portugal  
People waking up, taking back their minds  
Canada regards the US as the greatest threat to world peace  
When people search out information, awareness will increase  
Millions joining the ranks of those opposing globalization  
Developing pressure against United States Aggression»*



Autumn 2012, Iskra live in Italy

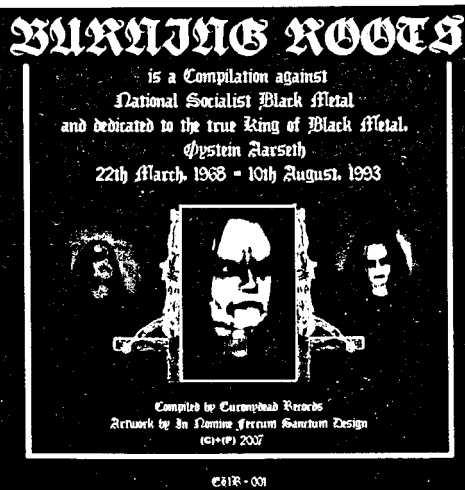
## THE RED AND THE BLACK

There is a fast-paced and relentless parade of names of characters and organizations on this record, all celebrated as heroes of the resistance and martyrs for freedom: Ida Luz Rodriguez, Mutulu Shakur, Theodore Kaczynski (aka the Unabomber), Mumia Abu-Jamal and also the Black Panthers, the Animal Liberation Front, the United Freedom Front, and the Puerto Rican separatists... the political-activist direction of this band is abundantly clear. They offer no figurative expressions, no ambiguity or nuance of interpretation. The same words spoken at the beginning of the Eighties by Assata Shakur, African-American militant of the Black Panthers and the Black Liberation Army, are transcribed in the album insert to seal the work, and define the path taken by Iskra in a peremptory manner:

*«It is the obligation of every person who claims to oppose oppression to resist the oppressor by every means at his or her disposal. Not to engage in physical resistance, armed resistance to oppression, is to serve the interests of the oppressor, no more, no less. There are no exceptions to the rule, no easy way out...».*

Therefore, the concern and disapproval expressed by members of the band towards the NSBM phenomenon is certainly not surprising:

*«I think that the most dangerous movement in black metal is the "war metal" and "Nazi skin black metal". Many of the bands involved within these sub-genres have a fairly clear Right-wing politic. Some incorporate the neo-hedonistic beliefs harbored by the Nazi party back in the 1920s-40s. Although many of these bands claim to be apolitical they espouse certain sentiments that exist within Fascist politics such as white pride and the ascension of Europe. Iskra is opposed to such backwards thought. These are the bands that will convince youngsters into voting for governments like the Bush regime, the Canadian Alliance (the Right-wing party of Canada), or into committing hate crimes on the street. These bands prey on the angry youth, who are often confused about their direction in life»<sup>4</sup>.*

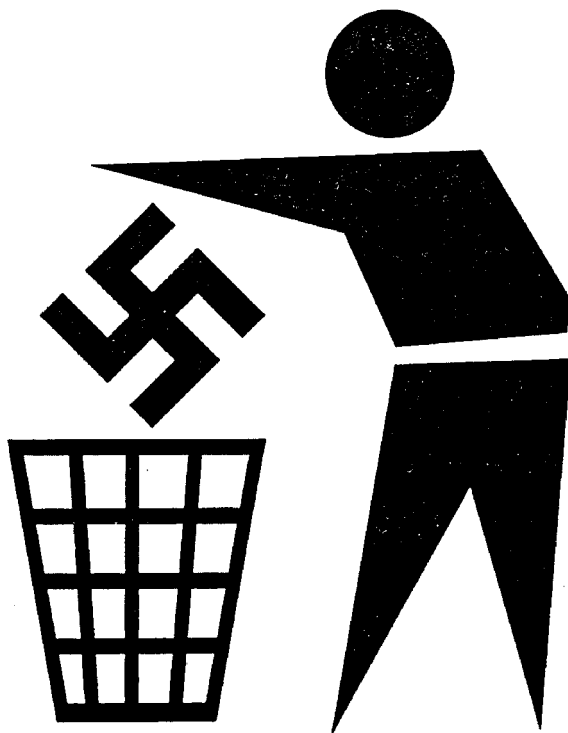


A first significant "ideological divide" within the black metal scene had taken place during the Nineties as a result of the murder of Euronymous of Mayhem at the hands of Varg Vikernes, leader of Burzum. The event, already clamorous in itself, was charged with political connotations according to the scenario that saw Vikernes associated with the neo-Nazis and Euronymous with the Communists, because of his known sympathies for the governments of the former Iron Curtain. In addition, in an attempt to curb the rampant NSBM phenomenon, led - willingly or not - by Burzum's actions, many have claimed the misanthropic and libertarian nature of black metal, by recalling the ideological inclinations of Mayhem's leader. This band, it should be remembered, was considered among the undisputed founders of the genre.

In the wake of these positions, in August 2007, Euronydead Records (nomen omen) in Berlin produced *Burning Roots*, the first "anti NSBM" compilation in homage to the late leader of Mayhem: a CD containing about twenty bands - not all necessarily black metal - coming from everywhere, including countries like Israel (represented by the anti-Fascist/anti-racist band Dager Dagerath). However, some discontent emerged because of the presence of the Swedish group Bestial Mockery, known to most for having militant members in the controversial Sons of Satan among their ranks. If the "Sons" are to be regarded as an NSBM project by many, this kind of cameo appearance on *Burning Roots* once more demonstrates the elementary parodistic - and unreliable - nature of the Scandinavian band. Witness their testimony, spelled in no uncertain terms, in the booklet of this rich anthology:

*«Politics does not belong in black metal, it is Satan's music! Bestial mockery hails the destruction of mankind in whichever Way and Name it is carried out [...] We are tired of getting associated with the crappy NSBM scene. We hate everyone equally!».*

When searching for outspoken and openly RABM bands, one soon realizes how the movement is constantly growing and spreading. Once again, Latin America offers coarse but effective examples, starting with the forerunners Profecium and ending with NeverChrist. The first, Argentinian Communists





*Profecium, forerunners of the Socialismo Satánico*

devoted to black metal, sang (with their second album *Socialismo Satánico*) of revolts of the proletariat, anti-Fascist killings, and orgies of bourgeois blood way back in 1997, complete with corpse paint and hammer and sickle. The latter, originating in Brazil, debuted with the high-sounding demo *Latinoamerican Elite of Antinazi Black Metal* (2007), a concentration of rather typical and elementary black metal from which emerges the tape's strong suit, a track called - unsurprisingly - *Antinazi Black Metal*. This clear statement of intent, is the expression of a total refusal of the political interferences that have gained a foothold in South America.

In spite of some mishaps along the way (in an interview with the Peruvian fanzine *Explosión Cerebral*, the leader of NeverChrist told of how two former members of the band respectively converted - ironically - to Christianity and Nazism!) the band's activity never stopped. But in spite of a few new releases, the statements regarding the expansion of the National Socialist disease in Latin America are always a major issue:

*«Yes! I believe that in Latin America the Nazism is expanding, because every day, in Brazil we even see those bastards here always inventing racist movements beddings, because the Latin people is formed by an infinity of racial mixtures, then is ridiculous and I do not know as in a place as Latin America with so many racial mixtures can exist an*

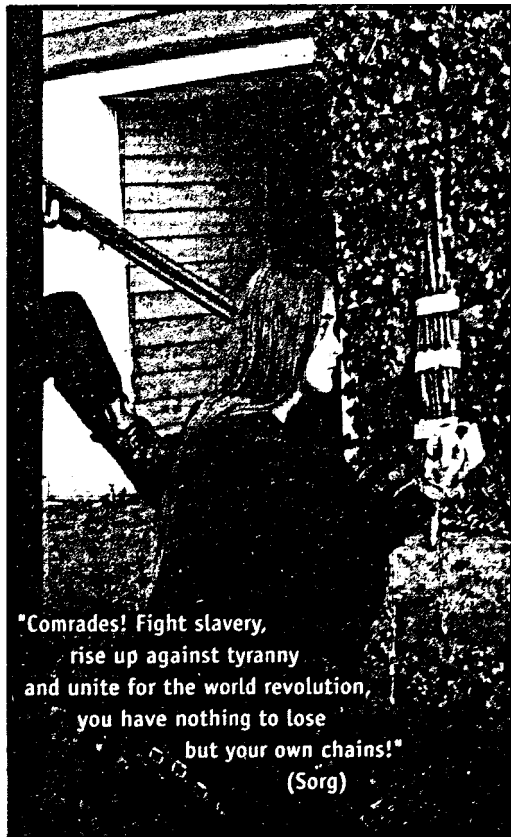


*excrement like that. [...] In its majority they are young people whom they look for something like being able, respect and something more in the society, but they look for the missed form, because the Nazis would kill all to us if his kingdom had won the war. They would need to study a little more and to learn than that excrement would go against of they themselves and to study more and to value its culture, on the contrary to suck the eggs of European and their culture»<sup>5</sup>.*

As we have seen in previous chapters, among the territories which once joined the Warsaw Pact there is an anti-Communist black metal dominant, but crossing the borders of the former Soviet bloc there are still those who resist, like a small Stalingrad, expressing old socialist pride to the sound of primitive riffs. Here we can find little known bands such as Mrakobesie, authors of a self-proclaimed «*communistic raw black metal*», with their aggressive interpretations of popular ballads of the regime, like *Katyusha* (a name to be associated with the famous rocket launcher used by the Red Army). On the same line, but with much more articulated implications, we find Jarost Marksa ("The fury of Marx"): this is a real Anarcho-Communist commune born from the union of a handful of Muscovite musicians led by a singer of French origins, Antoine Durand, who disappointed in the Western capitalist system, had emigrated to Russia in 2005, looking for a revived Bolshevik spirit. Their first EP, *We the People* (2008), relies on the ideal promoted by the former regime, triumphantly honored by black metal cover versions of famous hymns of the Red Army choir (see their interpretation of *Svyaschennaya Voina* - "The Holy War"). The original lyrics written by the band are along the lines of the strict orthodoxy of an unbeaten Eastern bloc, as can be seen in the long (lasting almost ten minutes) *United Under the Red Banner*.

*«The victory of Communism  
Shall heal all of our wounds*

*No religions, no races  
No countries, no classes  
To separate us anymore  
Unity, at last*



*"Comrades! Fight slavery,  
rise up against tyranny  
and unite for the world revolution,  
you have nothing to lose  
but your own chains!"  
(Sorg)*

*SorgSuart*

## THE RED AND THE BLACK

*The power of the people  
Communist triumph  
Ideas, immortal*

*We pledge our lives  
To the red banner  
Bow to none...»*

Moving away from the maximalist doctrines of the para-Soviet bands, there are also groups of libertarian black metal that are not aligned with the purely individualist attitude and whose outcome, in terms of music as well as concept, is quite unusual. This is the case of the Norwegian one-man band SorgSvart, who in response to the famous definition coined by early Darkthrone, *Norsk Arisk Black Metal* ("Norwegian Aryan Black Metal"), supports the motto *Anarkistisk Norsk Svart Metall* ("Anarchist Norwegian Black Metal"). This statement of intent has become an essential ideological pillar around which the creations of the multi-instrumentalist Sorg revolve:

*«Every composition I make is an angry army standing on the barricades under the black banner of Anarchism and every single tone of my compositions are warriors sent out in battle to crush the rulers and with only one mission, to fight back our freedom!»<sup>6</sup>.*

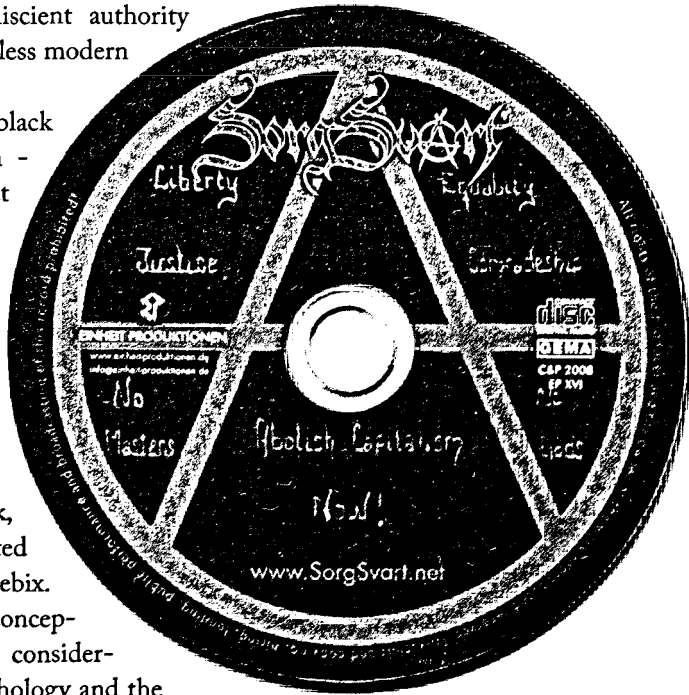
After the release of the first demo, the band received support and praise from Nocturno Culto of Darkthrone<sup>7</sup> himself and, with such references, it did not take long before SorgSvart reached the goal of a first album. *Fortapt Fra Verden I Vakkert Selvmord* (2006) is a mixture of folk, Viking and black metal that never loses sight of melody, including choral passages and symphonic openings to counterbalance the inevitable guitar outbursts. These musical elements and concepts were brought to the extreme in the next recording effort that came out in the Spring of 2008, *Vikingtid Og Anarki* (translated as "The era of the Vikings and Anarchy"), a riot of circled "A's", with invectives against capitalism, religion and anything that is connected to the model of Western consumerist society. Inside the booklet there is a sort of short manifesto in which Sorg himself shoots at close range against all of those traditional institutions that make man a slave, and on the last page he glosses programmatically: *«Power cannot be used, it is only abused»*. SorgSvart represents a peculiar case in the RABM scene, being able to blend together Anarchist proclamations and Nordic myth, love for nature and utopian idealism, all re-interpreted - at times in a chaotic manner - in the light of his own autobiographical microcosm.

*«Is it fair that a man living in poverty has to die at the age of 35 because a man in great wealth shall live until he is 80 or 90? Is it fair that children in Africa have to walk barefoot because rich fat men in U.S.A. shall drive large expensive cars? Is it fair that the Western world*

*has to kill innocent inhabitants of the poor world in war just for stealing their resources like oil and earn money?»<sup>8</sup>.*

In his struggle for freedom, equality and social justice, Sorg might find a valuable ally in another interesting Anarcho-pagan metal band, this time housed in the United States: Panopticon. The name incorporates the idea of the panopticon as drawn up by the English jurist and philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the late Nineteenth century: a radiocentric-shaped prison that would have allowed a single guard (located in the middle of the structure) to control all the prisoners by means of certain architectural features, arranged 360 degrees around him. An effective metaphor of the omniscient authority from which the defenseless modern man can find no escape.

The atmospheric black metal of Austin Lunn - founder of the project in 2007 - deals with an anti-racist paganism inspired by libertarian and primitivist philosophies. The reference bands to better understand its DNA are the celebrated masters of Anarcho-punk, Crass, and the undisputed godfathers of crust, Amebix. If you mix these sonic-conceptual directions with a considerable dose of Norse mythology and the revolutionary propaganda of agitators such as Emma Goldman and Albert Meltzer<sup>9</sup>, you might be able to get an idea of the theoretical cauldron from which albums such as the eponymous one of 2008, *Collapse* (2009), and the recent *Social Disservices* (2011) arise.



*«I am certainly proud of the fact that my ethnic roots are firmly planted in Scandinavia, as I find it to be a rich and beautiful culture. Heathenism and many forms of paganism have been bastardized by nationalism and Christianity, robbing us of our ethnic identity and replacing it with feeble minded religions and racism, so it excites me to see Norse mythology and Scandinavian culture present in a lot of black metal... just as long as it is not associated with Right-wing bullshit and NSBM garbage. [...] NSBM is a bunch of narrow minded, shock rock bullshit with*



*nothing relevant to offer music. It serves no purpose other than stroking the half flaccid members of a bunch of marginally talented musicians who aside from their oppressive point of view wouldn't stand out or be any different from the rest of the herd.*

*NSBM can't destroy black metal, because it is insignificant and mustn't be taken seriously. The moment that it is seen as legitimate is the moment it becomes an ideological threat<sup>10</sup>.*

But if many cry scandal in front of a basic inconsistency within NSBM, this does not mean there is a lack of equally contradictory spirits among the ranks of the unripe RABM scene, gathered in a movement that lacks coherence and community

interests as much as that of their "cousins in brown shirts", due to its embryonic state.

Essentially, in addition to the absence of stylistic coordinates of reference (although fleeting within NSBM as well), this newborn ideological and musical current still has to face a natural process of selection and definition of its characteristics. Until then, some degree of confusion will be inevitable - amplified by ill-concealed misunderstandings and approximate classifications - which results in the ease with which bands that can only be marginally assimilated in certain positions are co-opted in the ranks of RABM (or as easily dismissed). A process that is not dissimilar from what we have already seen happening within NSBM, and that in most cases, originates from word of mouth among fans or arbitrary interpretations of journalists who delve into risky conceptual analysis on the subject.

Therefore, it is often primarily the perception of those who listen/judge, and the very strong need, when the topic of the debate is of political nature, to draw well-defined stances in opposition to each other, canceling those gray areas that are difficult to categorize.

Any band that cover "uncomfortable" topics leave themselves open to this type of analysis, and inevitably end up being drawn towards the political center of gravity they refer to: in the case of the extreme Right, we should not forget what happened to Marduk<sup>11</sup>, while in the opposite direction, a prime example is offered by so-called Cascadian Black Metal<sup>12</sup>, led by the now universally known Wolves in the Throne Room, repeatedly mentioned as leading exponents of RABM because of the issues they deal with in their works (environmentalism, rejection of technology, return to rural life and a greater affinity with nature). If it is true that these issues are an integral part of the cultural background in which various Anarcho-libertarian movements are rooted, it is equally true that they are recurring themes among the ranks of the opposite ideological faction as well: for example, the exaltation of rural life of Walther Darré or the radical ecologism of Savitri Devi. We can conclude that the topics themselves are not a valid discriminant for declaring the political orientation of those who approach them.

For a strange twist of fate, it is possible to identify a "geopolitical" point of contact between Cascadian Black Metal and NSBM, that while probably random, still significantly demonstrates how opposites can inevitably converge. Cascadia is the name

by which a transnational macro-region in the Northwestern part of Canada and the United States is commonly identified, which extends longitudinally from Northern California to British Columbia. The same name also refers to a secessionist hypothesis that would see these states, along with Washington, Oregon and portions of other surrounding areas, become an autonomous "State within a State", or a region that is not



defined by political boundaries or bureaucratic impositions but rather by economic/environmental/climatic elements that are common to that particular geographical area.

It is unlikely that members of Cascadian Black Metal have deliberately chosen the name with the intent to underlie or support this rather unrealistic and utopian idea, and in truth, it is not a matter of paramount importance. However, it is interesting to note how, roughly speaking, it is the same concept behind the Northwest Territorial Imperative<sup>13</sup>, except for the different reasons behind the separatist drive and the fact that the countries involved would also include Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. The Northwest of the United States, being wilder and farther from the capital, seems to represent a sort of Shangri-La for such star-spangled independent inclinations, a place designated as a womb of utopias of salvation from the modern world, whether they are declined according to the pragmatic racial separatism of the extreme Right, or a place of rebirth of rural municipalities in the wake of socialism.

However, in spite of possible thematic junctures or political fiction theories, Aaron Weaver, drummer and founder of Wolves in the Throne Room, clearly wants to distance himself from any ideology, whether belonging to the Right or Left:

*«I said in an interview with a German magazine that I was annoyed that certain ideas I am connected to, such as radical environmentalism and heathen spirituality, have become associated with the culture of the hard-Right, especially in Europe. Obviously, WITTR is a group with no political affiliation whatsoever, but some people in the German antifa movement made a big issue out of it, even though I have consistently and forcefully expressed my disdain for the canon of Right-wing ideologies ad nauseam. I understand why black metal is threatening to the simplistic mentality of Anarcho-squatters and consti-*

*pated college boys. These "punks" and "intellectuals" have no space in their worldview for anything beyond the Left-wing politics of a 12 year old. It should be noted that WITTR is also vilified by the far Right. My feeling is that if you are hated by political people of all persuasions then you are doing something right»<sup>14</sup>.*



If it is obvious that the band could not be more distant from Nazi or Fascist beliefs, it is equally clear that the association between Wolves in the

Throne Room and RABM is far too simplistic. Unlike much more aggressive and committed projects as SorgSvart and Iskra, the distance from certain ideologies is not enough to throw the band from Olympia in the cauldron of Red & Anarchist black metal, although a certain commonality of spirit is undeniable (and the surge in popularity of the genre is probably due to their resounding success).

Similarly, equations such as environmentalism = Left or paganism = Right appear cheesy. In these cases, it is the perspective that makes a difference, even more so when RABM and NSBM are based on diametrically opposed political views, while the roots of black metal sink in a common musical, symbolic and thematic background, which leads to inevitable contact points. RABM might want to dismiss that set of influences inherited from the original Norwegian strain according to a completely new perspective, (after all, the fascination with nature, a newfound pagan/anti-Christian spirituality and the rejection of progress were already hallmarks of Scandinavian black metal), establishing itself as a new genre that combines politics and music on an opposing side.

However, it is still too early to put an overview of this nth heterodox musical current clearly into focus, nor is it yet possible to establish with certainty what its final destination will be. In an age like ours, marked by confusion and widespread uncertainty, the multitude of ideas circulating freely - and incessant mutual contaminations - confronts us with almost unlimited evolutionary scenarios. In this sense, RABM could offer itself as a bridgehead for further, unexpected leaps forward, or fall hopelessly in a micro-ghetto with no way out, unable to free itself from the cumbersome shadow of NSBM, which currently, is its main enemy and its only reason for existence.

Only time will tell of the next rise, or fall, of the vision of those who boldly choose to dye black metal with a new color.

## Notes:

1 - Iskra, from Crackfix Propaganda n.1.

2 - Extract from the about section of the Facebook group called: RABM - Red & Anarchist Black Metal (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/315672786893/?fref=ts>). At the date of first publication of this work in its original edition (February, 2013) there are two groups, named almost the same, that are dedicated to supporting and spreading the RABM scene. Apart from these, a site that is still relevant to the propaganda of the genre is the blog called, again, Red & Anarchist Black Metal (<http://r-a-b-m.blogspot.it/>).

3 - Iskra, from Crackfix Propaganda n.1.

4 - Ibid.

5 - NeverChrist, from Explosión Cerebral Zine (<http://explosionzine.webcindario.com>), 2008.

6 - SorgSvart, from Trollhorn Magazine n.4.

## THE RED AND THE BLACK

7 - In an interview published on the website of the popular newspaper Dagbladet ([www.dagbladet.no](http://www.dagbladet.no)) he claimed: «I'm a big fan of SorgSvart's demo».

8 - SorgSvart, *Now or Never: Anarchy!*, from Blutvergießen n.3, 2006.

9 - Emma Goldman (1869 - 1939) was a Russian Anarchist of Jewish descent, a militant trade unionist and supporter of what would later be known as feminist reforms. Albert Meltzer (1920 - 1996) was a British-born Anarcho-Communist known for bringing the Anarchist Black Cross to prominence back in the Sixties: an organization supporting the Anarchist prisoners detained in Spain during Francisco Franco's dictatorship.

10 - Panopticon, from Boca Suja, 2008.

11 - As a result of some of their controversial statements (see the chapter *Ultima Thule*), many NSBM fans have included the Swedes in the ranks of National Socialist metal, regardless of the repeated denials by the band. Since then, the debates about their work have become an unavoidable constant.

12 - Current born within American black metal (USBM), named after the territory adjacent the Cascade Mountains, where most bands come from.

13 - Northwest Territorial Imperative is a project to create a large "white bastion", geographically located in the Northwestern part of the United States, encouraging all nationalists and supremacists to move to those areas. The idea of creating this autonomous region, with the ultimate aim of a possible secession from the United States, was loudly supported by several leading personalities of the American extreme Right, first of all Richard Butler of the Aryan Nations and Robert Jay Mathews, who chose the state of Washington as the headquarters of the Silent Brotherhood.


14 - Wolves in the Throne Room, from Pitchfork (<http://pitchfork.com>), June 2009.





**RED & ANARCHIST BLACK METAL**

**UGA  
USBA**



IG SIND DIE  
EN BIE  
R RN  
NUN

DENKEN  
EHRER DIE  
WORT GOTTE  
SAT HADEN

14 - 88 IST UNSER GOTT!

# 2U74U

## The star-spangled hatecore aggravation

«WHEN WE FIND TIME, WE ARE THINKING TO START AN OLD-SCHOOL HATECORE BAND CALLED *THE HUNTER*,  
IN THE VEIN OF *ETHNIC CLEANSING* AND *MUDOVEN*»<sup>1</sup>

[WODULF]

**A**mong the bands we have mentioned so far, quite a few have expressed their appreciation for groups gravitating in the so-called hatecore scene on more than one occasion, and many of them have never hidden the fact that they are fans of some of the most extreme and brutal projects spawned by this seething cauldron of hate turned into music.

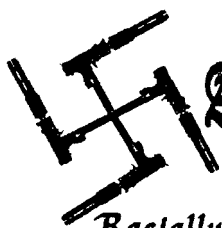
Over the past two decades, U.S. hatecore has become the undisputed leader on a global scale through a series of particularly aggressive and unscrupulous bands. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which protects the freedom of speech, has facilitated the invectives typical of a race war by the neo-Nazi trio Angry Aryans<sup>2</sup> (best sellers with Resistance Records), as well as the redneck misogynistic rants of The Raunchous Brothers<sup>3</sup> and the depraved excesses of the racist anti-social gore performed by Texas' Grinded Nig (authors of the chilling album *Freezer Full of Nigger Heads*<sup>4</sup>). Of course, the list could go on, but these three are the names that somehow deserve and require special attention in relation to the NSBM scene: Ethnic Cleansing, Mudoven and another heavyweight of intolerance, the outrageous and revered Vaginal Jesus.

The latter are one of the countless musical creations that have seen the participation of none other than Seth Putnam, frontman of the legendary Anal Cunt - the historical band devoted to a most shameful grind. Putnam (1968 - 2011) was a very controversial character who produced strongly offensive works with filthy lyrics about misogyny, racism, homophobia and all sorts of inconceivable blasphemies. His entire life, stopped short by a heart attack at the age of 43, could be summed up as the insignia of a spiteful crusade against all that is now commonly referred to as "politically correct". Almost no one has escaped his anathemas, or his cruel overdose of black humor. With a curriculum of this magnitude, it is not difficult to imagine the provocative potential of Vaginal Jesus.

The idea to create the project came about in April of 1988, when a group of friends, led by Putnam, started working in their spare time on both vulgar and anti-Semitic/anti-Christian songs, such as *Jesus Was Nothing but a Jew*.

*«Jesus was nothing but a fucking jew,  
If we were in Auschwitz, I'd give him a tattoo,  
Jesus was nothing but a fucking kike,  
Let's nail him to the cross with ten-inch spikes»*

Starting with Vaginal Jesus' first 7" EP titled *Jesus Saves... His Pennies*, the band's predisposition to contents that are openly racist and mocking towards Jews and African Americans is immediately noticeable. Then the anti-Christian component suddenly waned, so much so, as to push the band to wonder about the need to change their name:



**Angry Aryans**

*Racially Motivated Violence*

*«After we finished the recording, we decided to record more racist songs and add them to the 7"; basically to drop more of the silly songs we had and just concentrate on being racist. We considered changing the name of the band after this, but we decided to stick with it. The name doesn't have anything to do with what we sing about anymore»<sup>5</sup>.*

The song that closes *Jesus Saves... His Pennies* is the only one that is not credited as an original work by Vaginal Jesus, and further info is not provided as to who the real author is. But after a quick listen, it is easy to realize that *Coon Bashin'* is nothing but an irreverent, if not racist cover of the famous song *Hot Rockin'* by Judas Priest!

The riots that occurred in Los Angeles in the spring of 1992, unleashed after the acquittal of some police officers accused of beating an African-American man, did not find the clan of professional provocateurs living in Boston unprepared: a few months later, Vaginal Jesus issued another vitriolic vinyl dedicated to Rodney Glen King, the black victim of the Los Angeles Police

**The  
Raunchous  
Brothers**



**DIE! FAGGOT DIE!**



Department, with the unmistakable title *Beat Rodney Down*. Just about ten tracks, all linked by incessant propaganda against the African-American population, who are painted as a jumble of criminals, crack dealers, rapists and parasites of society in general. In fact, the sequence of song titles leaves little to the imagination: *Slave*

*Runaway*, *Blood Nigger II*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Fetch the Rope* and *Niggers Are Not Friends of Mine*.

The band went through a series of record labels: Swasticrore, Reich-O-Rama, Tri-State Terror and Resistance, in a true vertical climb to the elite of Right-wing music extremism that led them to become a media and sales phenomenon. In 2000, they released the anthology CD *Affirmative Apartheid*, which collects all of the material produced during a decade long career: it is the equivalent of a straight punch in the stomach, starting with the cover (a picture of a swastika on fire created by the Serbian Hammerskin



Seth Putnam (first on the right) with Vaginal Jesus

community), while on the back of the booklet there is a paradoxical and very aggressive disclaimer that gives a good idea about the overflowing vitriol that makes up this poisonous optical disc:

*«These are songs, not instructions. If you happen to lynch a spearchucking nigger, nail a jew to a cross, shoot a drunk injun, run over a greasy fence-jumping spic, sterilize a loathsome race-traitor, or otherwise cause injury or death to any other "human" garbage, it's of your own volition, and has nothing to do with us. Not to say that it wouldn't be funny, because it would»<sup>6</sup>.*

Seth Putnam had clear ideas on the path to take with Vaginal Jesus, and thanks to the reputation guaranteed by his main band, Anal Cunt, he directed his controversial side-



project straight into the soft underbelly of the mainstream with blitzes that only a few remember nowadays, but which have undoubtedly left their mark. Some will remember Putnam's guest appearance on Pantera's eighth album, *The Great Southern Trendkill* (1996), but not many people know of the connection between Phil Anselmo, lead singer of Pantera, on other occasions criticized for certain racist statements, and Anal Cunt, which was followed by a bizarre joint venture directly under the auspices of Vaginal Jesus:

*«Pantera have gotten us on three of their shows, which was really cool of them. It's cool playing huge shows. We've always gone over really well with the crowds, too. We've done Vaginal Jesus covers when we played with Pantera as well [...] One time after an Anal Cunt show in New Orleans - where Phil Anselmo is from - I grabbed the guitar from the guitarist, my drummer played drums, and Phil sang nine or ten Vaginal Jesus songs with us. We did the whole Beat Rodney Down 7"; plus the song Blood Nigger from the first 7"»<sup>7</sup>.*

Realizing the commercial potential of records such as those by Vaginal Jesus, Resistance Records decided to push their foot on the accelerator of the most violent and antisocial hatecore at the beginning of 2000. A choice that many militants, new and old, found nothing short of outrageous, branding the bands of that scene as part of one of the

most damaging and counterproductive phenomena within the racist cause. Only a few years later, there was a moderate turnaround that saw a decline in the distribution of the most controversial titles, slowly replaced by bands and albums that were somewhat more accommodating and in line with the conservative mentality of the average American.



As if albums like *Affirmative Apartheid* were not enough, an offspring of Vaginal Jesus came to life towards the end of the Nineties, another restless creature called Mudoven. This is the one-man band founded by their guitarist, Jim Crow - an irreverent segregationist pseudonym - who, juggling vocals, electric guitar and a drum machine, took over the invectives of the mother band, adapting the lyrics and themes to vent his own personal interpretation of hatecore.

Mudoven were officially formed in the fall of 1995, and to date they have released just a handful of productions. Excluding a disregarded demo (*Hate*, 1996) and several appearances on scene-related compilations, their legacy is summed up by a split album, a couple of 7" - titled *Aryan Vs. Alien* (1997) and *Mediaviolence* (2012) - and the full-length *Truth and Tragedy: Life in the Occupied Zone* (1998). The music is raw, fast and aggressive in accordance with Crow's musical background, largely made of hardcore and thrash metal. The deviation of these sounds in a white power context is manifested through lyrics full of hate and disgust for Jews and African-Americans, where the caustic and obscene "sense of humor" of Vaginal Jesus is completely abdicated in favor of an extremely cynical attitude, foaming with rage.

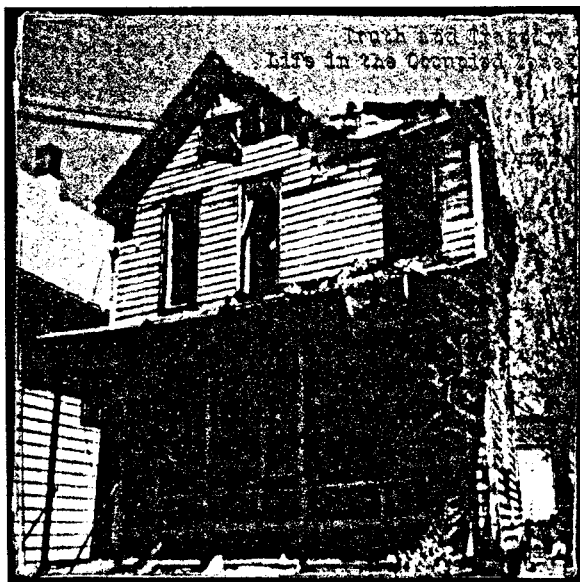
*Aryan Vs. Alien* is characterized by a cover artwork with extreme impact: the front portrays one of the notorious piles of skeletal corpses photographed in German concentration camps, paired with a back cover showing a picture of a plaque commemorating the victims of the Shoah vandalized with spray-painted swastikas. The EP also contains a song dedicated to Theodore Kaczynski, the former American university professor who made headlines for his terrorist activities as the Unabomber (or indeed, as in the variant of this track, *Unabomer*). The song was written a few months before Kaczynski was captured, a character later disavowed by Crow because some of his ideas were considered in-

compatible with the white racist cause<sup>8</sup>.

The success of this 7" quickly led to the release of the CD *Truth and Tragedy: Life in the Occupied Zone*, fourteen hymns of hate and violent claims in favor of the white population. The



issues it deals with are certainly not new, it is rather Crow's fierce and warlike argumentative vein that adds fuel to a fire that is perpetually powered by racism and anti-Semitism. There are also songs of proud contempt for those that Mudoven indicate as traitors of the race<sup>9</sup>, and attacks against the American government, seen as a servant of Zionism and of the god of money. Like its sibling, *Affirmative Apartheid* by older brothers Vaginal Jesus, Mudoven's full-length is also accompanied by a sarcastic disclaimer («*These are songs, not instructions...*») with the purpose of relieving the project from any liability in terms of emulation by potential listeners.



*Mudoven's only full-length,  
Truth and Tragedy: Life in the Occupied Zone (1998)*

A concrete link with the NSBM scene - or at least, the Right-wing extreme metal one - arrived in 2005 with a split album shared with Der Stürmer and Arghoslent, a limited edition clear vinyl which was also one of the last releases by the Vinland Winds label, mainly devoted to National Socialist black metal. As a matter of fact, Mudoven's works continue to be treated with respectful reverence within the metal scene: there are many bands that praise their releases and refer to them as an explicit influence, continuing to carry the baton unabashedly. From the hatecore of the late Nineties to the NSBM of the early twenty-

first century, the mission and goals of these reactionaries in music remains the same.



Mudoven were also the only band on American soil who had the audacity to explicitly greet and thank who we might consider the most extreme, violent and offensive hatecore band of all time, a band on which it is worth dwelling with due care: Ethnic Cleansing, the notorious and outrageous discriminatory punk group active between 1995 and 2005, and dead set against 99.99% of this planet's population. A percentage that is anything but exaggerated, given that from the band's point of view only 0.01% of today's inhabitants of the Earth have the doctrinal and racial characteristics (ie: white, Aryan, civilized and aware) that would be useful to save them from the mass extermination that they hope for. «*You will worship or despise us. There is no middle*



ground. *There has never been, nor there ever will be*<sup>10</sup>, said the singer and leader Stooley Carmichael<sup>11</sup>, and it is hard to blame him.

Carmichael was a fanatical consumer of hardcore and old school Oi! and his heroes were mostly skinhead bands inspired by the German school of the Eighties/Nineties, which is when he approached the European RAC scene collecting all the best that was offered by historic labels such as Rock-O-Rama, Rebelles Européens and Skull Records. All in all, the story could have ended here, were it not for the eruption of heavy metal in an environment so revered by the young Californian, which he interpreted as a personal affront.

*«Back in those days, the majority of the skinhead bands were Oi!/hardcore/punk style. The music was fast and furious. It was packed full of aggression. Bands like Legion 88, Werwolf, Radikahl and Endstufe (old) were true heroes. White skinhead bands were a force to be reckoned with! Then "heavy metal" reared its ugly head. [...] By 1994, it quickly became apparent that metal was here to stay and that the "glory days" of Oi! and hardcore were gone. The reality of the situation sickened me ad nauseam. I decided that something needed to be done. [...] I formed Ethnic Cleansing almost solely for the reason that I was tired of the "Iron Maiden/Quiet Riot" sound that was/is so prominent in the white music scene»*<sup>12</sup>.

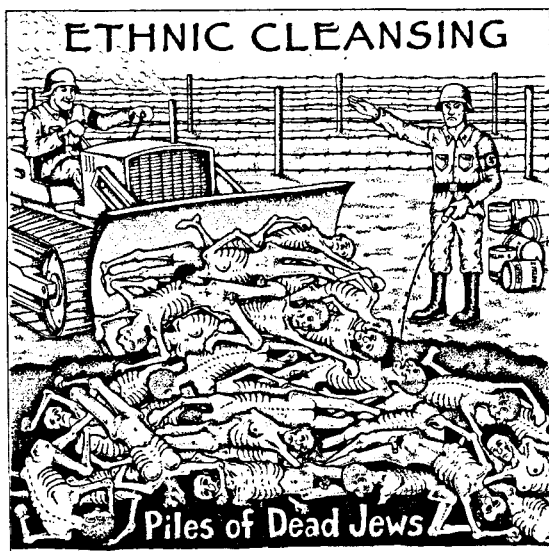
It might bring a smile to think that a *casus belli* of a purely stylistic nature triggered a reaction which spawned one of the most outrageous, cruel and insulting bands to ever come out of the white power scene, but Carmichael immediately showed that, as far as he is concerned, the subject was not to be taken lightly. From his point of view, there is a direct, merciless and automatic equation between heavy metal and "white trash", that is, that segment of the white and disadvantaged American population, devoid of economic and cultural resources that would guarantee them a respectable place in society. The typical image of a white trash community brings to mind those gigantic asphalt blocks in which entire families camp with their dilapidated caravans or mobile homes, consuming a miserable life made of schemes and odd jobs.

*«Heavy metal is associated with people of a lower intellect and is typically linked to alcohol abuse, cigarette addiction, and tooth decay (not to mention inbreeding and mental retardation). [...] As long as there are these squalid, barnyard-types tarnishing the movement, we can surely forget about any hope for the future of the race»*<sup>13</sup>.

It was January 29, 1995 when Stooley Carmichael along with Dan Rather, Jerry Springer and Larry King (all pseudonyms stolen from American television and journalism, with particular attention to some overseas trash TV) recorded the four tracks of their first EP live in the studio on vinyl, an unparalleled and fierce charge of blasphemy called *Piles of Dead Jews*. While the anti-Semitic streak of the album is undeniable - beginning with the title - one can not help but notice the tenacious verbal violence addressed to white people too, who are attacked on at least half of the record, as in the song *Whigger*.

«He looks like a spic, yet he wants to be black  
 Even the niggers laugh at this crap  
 Something must be wrong with our country  
 When a white boy decides he'd rather be a monkey»

The same venom applies to the despised "children of the caravan", severely singled out in the song *White Trash* - a track filled with epithets amid allegations of degradation, incest, alcoholism and domestic violence.



The shocking covers - by Poison Ivan - of the two 7" by *Ethnic Cleansing: Piles of Dead Jews* and *Hitler Was Right (More Dead Jews)*, both released in 1995

*Calabasas Kike* is entirely dedicated to the Jewish community settled in Calabasas, a town in the county of Los Angeles. It is a charming town in the hills of the San Fernando Valley which not only boasts many international film and music stars among its residents, but is also the base of operations for *Ethnic Cleansing*, the place where Carmichael grew up and where he seems to have cultivated a very dark anti-Semitic hatred since his early adolescence, a resentment that is almost pathological.

*Ethnic Cleansing's* own graphic designer, Poison Ivan, their ally since the very beginning and the creator of all their artwork, took it upon himself to further exaggerate this display of blind and total hatred: the cover design for *Piles of Dead Jews* is a ruthless depiction of mockery and murder that cannot be ignored by even the most jaded underground consumers, accustomed to the worst atrocities (in terms of graphics, sounds, literature and so on).

«No, this is no fuckin' joke... this is for real. [...] Picture their cover art... some barbed wire fencing in the background, with a pile of Zyklon B drums

*piled before it. A pair of happy stormtroopers, one sieg heiling the other, and the second happy stormtrooper is driving a bulldozer. The bulldozer is pushing a pile of corpses into a giant pit, and his buddy is pissing into the mouth of one of the corpses»<sup>14</sup>.*

The black and white work by Poison Ivan had such an impact that, in February 2000, Rotten.com, the infamous on-line archive of disturbing images and assorted morbidity (accidents, violent deaths, deformities and sexual perversions) reproduced the artwork of *Piles of Dead Jews*, describing it with the following words: «*This is perhaps the single most offensive album design ever*».

As soon as the EP was in the hands of the band, Carmichael sent some copies to the least suitable places, such as the liberal-progressive punk magazines Flipside and Maximumrocknroll, and the stronghold of mainstream television, MTV. Truth be told, if the latter did not pay too much attention, the reactions of the punk press were very different and the reviews were readily photocopied on a flyer used by the band as a sarcastic insert in their albums.

Ethnic Cleansing proclaimed themselves: «*The most hateful band on the fucking planet*», accompanying their flyers with harassing graphics and improbable jokes always directed at the same targets. In their second hardcore assault, *Hitler Was Right (More Dead Jews)* also released in 1995, the five recorded tracks resumed the route undertaken where the debut had left off, and even the main themes were the same. Still, two songs deserve to be mentioned: *Metal Sucks*, an obsessive hardcore anathema against heavy metal and its white trash audience; and *Fuck America*, which in 58 seconds flat, focuses all of the band's contempt and anger against their own nation, in an outburst of racist and monotonous punk with a rather predictable final outcome. The cover, depicting Adolf Hitler on top of a pile of emaciated corpses, was again designed by Poison Ivan and provided a violent and controversial business card that could not be ignored.

Not surprisingly, the recording of this second single was somewhat troubled. The laborious search for a sound engineer who would agree to work on material with such explicit contents brought Ethnic Cleansing to the town of Ossining (New York), and more specifically to a small studio owned by a certain Jerry.

*«I searched around until I found a studio that was willing to deal with "racist" material. Upon arriving at the new studio, I was welcomed by a curly-haired, hooked-nosed kike. He said, "You're the guy who wants the racist stuff remixed?". I replied with, "Yeah, that's me". We then went into the room with the mixing board and he says "I charge 60\$ an hour. I don't care about the content". He put the DAT into the machine and hit the "play" button. After about 30 seconds, his face turned white and he began to shake. "I thought that this stuff was against blacks or something! You're against JEWS!!! You're a fucking Nazi asshole!"»<sup>15</sup>.*

*«"You fucking guys are NAZIS! You're against JEWS! I thought this was supposed to be anti-black, not Nazi music!". We assured him that this was merely a prank, a joke. This seemed*

to disarm him long enough to mutter "Well, I sure hope so, because someone is liable to firebomb your house in response to something this horrendous!" After it was all out of his system, Jerry carried on with the task, business as usual. [...] A Yid remixed Hitler Was Right that day for 66\$. We paid him the cabbage, and then we bailed - laughing all the way home»<sup>16</sup>.

The band also recorded an album, *Hail AIDS!* (2000), a real pinnacle of outrage carved into music, among the most extreme and obscene records of all time. In comparison to the previous productions, the album cover (that shows the grinning face of the American serial killer Ted Bundy) can almost be considered a tame choice - far less gratuitously extreme than the vinyls released a few years earlier. Ethnic Cleansing took an obvious (and somewhat sensational) step back, removing the swastikas which should have appeared on the CD on their own volition. It is the first and only case of true self-censorship by the band, but at the same time, they did not compromise on the reproduction of the drawing of two corpses by their usual trusted graphic artist.

The 1000 numbered copies of *Hail AIDS!* start with *Siege!*, a telephone monologue by extremist James Mason<sup>17</sup> where he basically wishes for constant tension, and offers



an invitation to accept any episode of violence with joy along with any social disruption that might significantly contribute to the collapse of the U.S. government. Stances that - not surprisingly - are fully shared by Carmichael::

«I support the work of James Mason. I agree with his philosophy of revolution. I support violent acts of terrorism, bombings, mass murder, serial murder, rape and other forms of unrest. Anything that shakes the foundation of the system is good in my eyes. Worse is better. The worse things get, the weaker the system gets. When all hell breaks loose and the "bottom falls out", the Jews and their system will be trampled into the ground. Only then will the Aryan people be free»<sup>18</sup>.

Once the introduction from *Siege!* ends, a sequence of musical hand grenades are launched sparing no one: targeting California with its Mexican immigrants, the Federal Government destined to implode, the Asian minority, and so on and so forth. Among the songs, *McMurder* stands out, dedicated to James Huberty, the mass murderer who entered a McDonald's in San Ysidro (California) in July 1984, killing over twenty people, including many Mexicans, along with *The New Racism*, which speaks of the renunciation

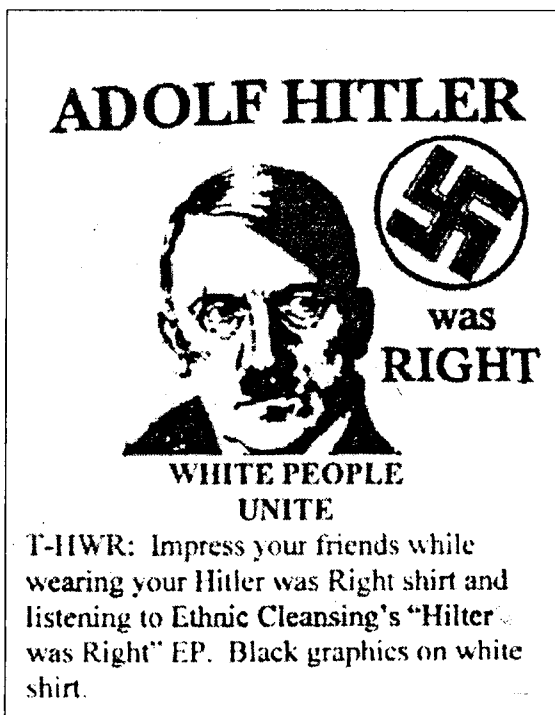
of Christianity that every true racist should take. According to Ethnic Cleansing, if the story of Jesus Christ is nothing but a bad Levantine fairy tale, the only plausible response to his worship must be sought in the Third Reich.

*«Jesus Christ never fucking existed... he's a fraud. There is only Adolf Hitler.  
That's right, Adolf Hitler is the closest we've ever come to a fucking God.  
At least we know that Hitler existed... we know he is real»*

An album like *Hail AIDS!* redefines the concept of extreme, bringing it to a pathological excess that is similar to psychiatric distress. The reviews that appear on the pages of white power magazines and websites all unanimously agree on defining the Californian hatecore of Ethnic Cleansing as the true point of no return, an unprecedented zenith of racist aggression. The band has earned a reputation that balances between revered worship and unforgivable heresy, and it is strange to read the outraged, if not openly disgusted, comments of neo-Nazi magazines describing the band's releases as «... *The most racist thing I have ever heard*»<sup>19</sup>.

The evidence of an irreparable gap between the excesses of Carmichael's band and the "institutional" environments of white subversion manifests itself on several occasions. An example is found in the interview appearing in issue 8 of the German edition of *Blood & Honour* (Summer 1999): in response to the ravings of the leader of Ethnic Cleansing about AIDS and a coveted global genocide that will sweep away a good portion of the world's population, the magazine responded with an editorial note at the bottom of the page where the sanity of the American singer was openly doubted and they admitted to being one step away from not even publishing the interview. In other words: too extreme, even for a neo-Nazi magazine!

In light of this, it is not difficult to understand the thread that binds a band like Ethnic Cleansing to the NSBM scene. And although the Californian band is all but kind towards metal per se, it is also true that, in one way or another, they find themselves



frequently entangled within it: one need only refer to the book by Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun*, where the band ends up in the cauldron of "Nazi black metal" without any distinctions. While their side shows no mercy toward the kind of heavy metal modeled on white trash, it should be noted that Ethnic Cleansing prove only slightly more benevolent towards NSBM.

*«It depends almost entirely on how the vocals sounds. We feel that the pervasive "Cookie Monster" singing style implemented by vast numbers of these bands come off about as threatening as an elderly invalid with a piece of spaghetti. It's really too stupid for words»<sup>20</sup>.*

## Notes:

1 - Wodulf, from *Paeans of Hate* n.5, May 2010. Wodulf are a Greek NSBM band formed by two-thirds of Der Stürmer, whose singer Jarl Von Hagall also lent his voice to the Hellenic hatecore project Oliki Katharsi ("Total Cleaning").

2 - They are the ones that inspired the title of this chapter, "2YT4U", which stands for *Too White for You* and is also the title of their second album. The acronym is also a tattoo in large letters on the groin of the band's guitarist, Chris Pist.

3 - A couple of examples to get an idea: *«Listen to nothing but heavy metal, speed metal and NS black metal. [...] Punk is the same thing as rap. Punk is the same thing as Judaism. Young people need to destroy and throw away all their old Ramones, Misfits, Black Flag and other zionist faggot punk albums»,* or *«As far as assaulting women: do it often and without mercy. It is your birthright as a man and a warrior to rape 'em all! HAIL RAPE!!»*. The Raunchous Brothers, from *Hatemonger* n.3, December 2003.

4 - Since the beginning, Grinded Nig have embarked on a wild chase in the name of a Grand Guignolesque extremism that is almost pathological. The neo-Nazi label Micetrap Records took more than a year to find a printer willing to produce the graphics that accompany *Freezer Full of Nigger Heads*, smugly described as: *«The most obscene, gross, disgusting and over-the-top artwork to have ever been created for any genre of music»*. However, Micetrap Records is not new to vulgar propaganda operations: when speaking of pure NSBM, they have produced the Hungarian-inspired barbaric metal of Tengereken, and also the coarse WarButcher, led by Captain Molesto. Originating from Florida, their full-length debut *Bulldozer of Semitic Destruction* (2005) has even sparked legal disputes between the band and the recording studio, which ordered them not to mention its name on the album for fear of being associated with the NSBM scene.

5 - *Vaginal Jesus, Puritans, steer clear!*, from *Resistance* n.25, winter 2005/2006.

6 - From the liner notes of *Affirmative Apartheid* (2000).

7 - *Vaginal Jesus, Puritans, steer clear!*, from *Resistance* n.25, winter 2005/2006.

8 - Despite the explicit "anti-Unabomber" stance, the song would later be included in the band's only album, accompanied by some liner notes which clarify the meaning of this tribute to the ecologist attacker: a homage to the actions of terror, rather than to the terrorist as such.

9 - It is legitimate to open a small parenthesis on the explicit as well as specific *Lightning Rod - Your Band Fucking Sucks and You're a Fucking Jew*. The song is dedicated to David Custer, leader of the rudimentary racist hate rock band Lightning Rod and owner of MSR Productions, a label/mailorder specializing in the distri-

bution of white power material, guilty of having blatantly profited on the proceeds derived from the sale of Vaginal Jesus records.

10 - S. Carmichael, *AIDS As Antidote*, from the biographical notes included in the split Vaginal Jesus/Ethnic Cleansing *Pissing on Jew Pussies* (2005).

11 - A pseudonym that conjures the black activist Stokely Carmichael in a desecrating manner.

12 - Ethnic Cleansing, from 100% White n.2, 1997.

13 - Ethnic Cleansing, from Napalm Rock n.11, August/September 1997.

14 - Review of *Piles of Dead Jews* signed by Katz, from Flipside n.96, June/July 1995.

15 - Ethnic Cleansing, from 100% White n.2, 1997.

16 - S. Carmichael, *Yes, He Was*, from the biographical notes included in the split Vaginal Jesus/Ethnic Cleansing *Pissing on Jew Pussies* (2005).

17 - The first contacts between the band and Mason date back to the autumn of 1995, when he was still detained in the prison of Canon City, Colorado, where he had been jailed for threatening his former partner, who also happened to be with her new Mexican boyfriend, with a gun. This episode of betrayal by Mason's girl is addressed with particular fury by Ethnic Cleansing: apart from the rigmarole of insults against multiracial couples mentioned in the notes of the split Vaginal Jesus/Ethnic Cleansing *Pissing On Jew Pussies* (2005), within the same CD, there is a macabre bonus of a recording of the phone call from 1994, between Mason himself, and his ex. A six minute conversation where the latter is repeatedly insulted until she bursts into tears.

18 - Ethnic Cleansing, from Warhead n.1, 1997.

19 - Blood and Honour UK, 1996.

20 - Ethnic Cleansing, from The Stormer n.9, September 2005.

## Satanic Skinhead Propaganda

*«SATANIC SKINHEAD PROPAGANDA IS A CURSE ON EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING»<sup>1</sup>.*

[ANTICHRIST KRAMER]

**U**nited States, early twenty-first century: in a remote and little known town in Indiana, Antichrist Kramer founded a record label that is still considered among the most violently satanic and politically extreme ever to rise within the circle of extreme underground, and not just the National Socialist black metal scene, but also the industrial and hatecore scenes. The name chosen is the perfect synthesis of its desecrating mission: Satanic Skinhead Propaganda.

*«Satanic Skinhead's sole existence is to spread hatred, evil, terror, pain and Satan. Satanic Skinhead is my propaganda beast, which is, and will always be, here to trample the weak pathetic PIGS who stand in my way and my message of WAR. [...] I didn't choose to do what I do. I was chosen to do what I do. I was vomited forth unto this planet to serve as a messenger to open the eyes of the blind and spread the word of Satan»<sup>2</sup>.*

Over the last decade, more than forty releases among CDs, vinyl, tapes and boxes of disturbing content have shocked and, at the same time, excited a music scene associated with extremists of every kind. The products offered by Satanic Skinhead Propaganda are real blasphemies in music, where the boundaries of style and genre are unstable and what really matters is the brutally anti-Christian and anti-Semitic attitude. Black metal, grind, noise, dark ambient, hatecore... there are no limits in terms of genre, what is important to Kramer is that each band involved is ready to challenge the Judeo-Christian enemy to the bitter end.

*«NSBM is not the only form of music that is promoted on SSP. In general NSBM and ALL black metal is pathetic garbage, made by confused and lost human cattle. Bilderberger zionist slave swine whom think that they are above the masses, when in fact are just as much at fault at those they supposedly wish to see exterminated. I have been involved in the extremest metal for over 22 years now. My opinion should matter to no one but myself, so I will not waste my time explaining my belief system as I do not care what people think of anything. I only care about what I know is real»<sup>3</sup>.*



In fact, Kramer's own productions, speak eloquently and are dripping with pure hate. His first steps were taken in January 2003, when Kramer started the extreme metal magazine called *Satanic Skinhead* (subtitle: "Elitist Satanic Terrorist Propaganda"). The 200 numbered copies of this pamphlet filled with heresies were rejected by a long list of printers, who refused to deal with material of a Fascist nature, but Kramer still managed to fulfill his mission in the name of Satan, in spite of every obstacle. Each issue of the magazine bears a keyword, a motto acting as an explicit call to order: the first one was accompanied by the acronym *F.O.M.B.M.*<sup>4</sup>, followed by *Anti-Christ Ordered Extermination*, and *Crush the Weak*. The fourth issue of the fanzine (*Ascension to Satanic Superiority*) was announced for late 2006, but ultimately never saw the light. At the same time, however, the namesake label pursued its work at full capacity.



*Antichrist Kramer, owner and mastermind of  
Satanic Skinhead Propaganda*

*«This is not a "zine", this is not a "record label", Satanic Skinhead Propaganda is exactly what its name implies: hate propaganda»<sup>5</sup>.*

The bands signed by Kramer embrace every possible evil, intolerant and discriminatory degeneration, with special attention towards the most radical form of NSBM and all those realities that are celebrated by admirers of the past Nazi regime. So, we find names such as Absurd, Der Stürmer, White Wolves Kommando, Martial, Sturmführer, Stosstrupp and Vaginal Jesus on the same roster. On the other hand, even *Satanic Skinhead Propaganda's* sister label, Audial Decimation Records (specializing in industrial music, noise and suchlike), does not seem to want to deviate too much from the subject, having started its activities with an album that has a dizzying white power aftertaste: *New Era*, by the American band Revolutionary Command, a controversial power-electronics project that maintains the strictest anonymity.

Kramer himself shows off with his "incorrect" project of venomous anti-Semite electronics called Deathkey, which ended up being the center of boycott campaigns several



times by a fringe of the American noise scene. The titles of some of his audio productions released in recent years are enough to get a clear idea of it all: *Hammer of Aryan Terror*, *Totenkopf*, *Doctrine of Intolerant Hatred*, *Behead the Semite...*

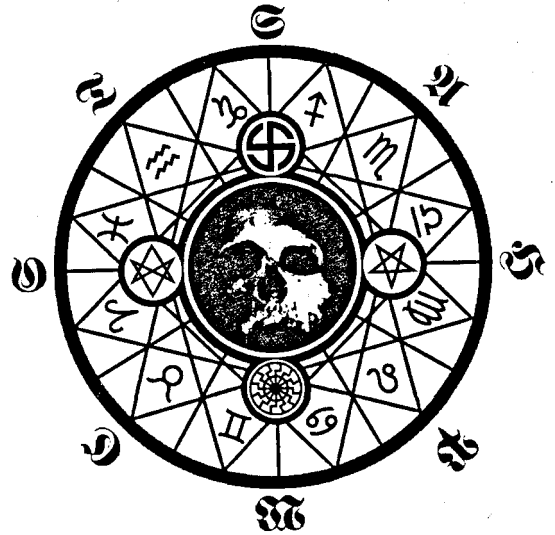
But the most extreme and controversial record (and the most sought after) of the entire Satanic Skinhead Propaganda catalog is, without a doubt, the international anthology released on CD in 2006, titled *Satanic Skinhead: Declaration of Anti-Semetic Terror*. With fourteen bands involved, and some interpreting several songs, the disc is a caustic rundown where musical, ideological and graphic excesses, mingle in a stinging magma: Der Stürmer, Deathkey, Satanic Warmaster, Nachtkult, Sturmführer, Evil Incarnate, Wolfhere, Xenophobia, and so on. This tremendous sound aggression goes hand in hand with racism, creating one of the most explicit and barbaric experiences ever produced in the black metal underground.

*«I FULLY SUPPORT RACISM. I WELCOME A RACE WAR. I want to see death and pain and BLOOD in the streets. I want this whole world destroyed. I want to usher every last one of you subhuman filth into HELL. When I walk down the street, I don't see every white person as my equal. I SEE VERY FEW PEOPLE ON THIS PLANET AS THAT. This world is INFESTED and OVERRUN with the weak minded and the weak willed. As I have said time and time again, I SUPPORT HATE CRIMES. I SUPPORT RACIAL VIOLENCE. I SUPPORT HATRED TOWARDS ANY AND EVERY RACE»<sup>6</sup>.*

Although Kramer candidly admits to supporting various neo-Nazi organizations, and despite the fact that his passionate anti-Semitism has been blatantly expressed over and over again<sup>7</sup>, we should point out that his interpretation of Hitler's ideology has very little to do with politics. We are faced rather with a *Weltanschauung* that is completely devoted to the triumph of a devastating satanic holocaust, and in this sense, Hitler would only

be an instrument of hatred, some might even call him a mere "demonic accessory". This is a significant step backward when compared to the second wave of NSBM bands that got rid of the early forms of Satanism, and chose to evolve in ideological terms. Here Kramer turns back the clock to the darkest night of primordial black metal terrorism, proclaiming himself bearer of darkness and total misanthropic desolation. However, given the constant and complacent collaborations with full-blown National Socialist ideologists, such as Der Stürmer («*They are my brothers in Cosmotheory and W.A.R.. Once the veil is lifted and reality is exposed, the masses will see what we already know*»<sup>8</sup>), this radically nihilist position might seem ambiguous and contradictory. On the other hand, Antichrist Kramer also wants to express the strict distinction according to which Nazism is to be exclusively understood as a mere instrument of absolute evil, and nothing more.

A renowned illustrator<sup>9</sup>, Kramer also developed some special occult seals blessing the mission of Satanic Skinhead Propaganda. We are referring to the "Deathangle", a skull encased in a peculiar hooked triangle, and the "Deathkey" (hence the name of his power-electronics project), another human skull placed in a double circle accompanied by the cryptic alphabetical acronym SAHPWCST.



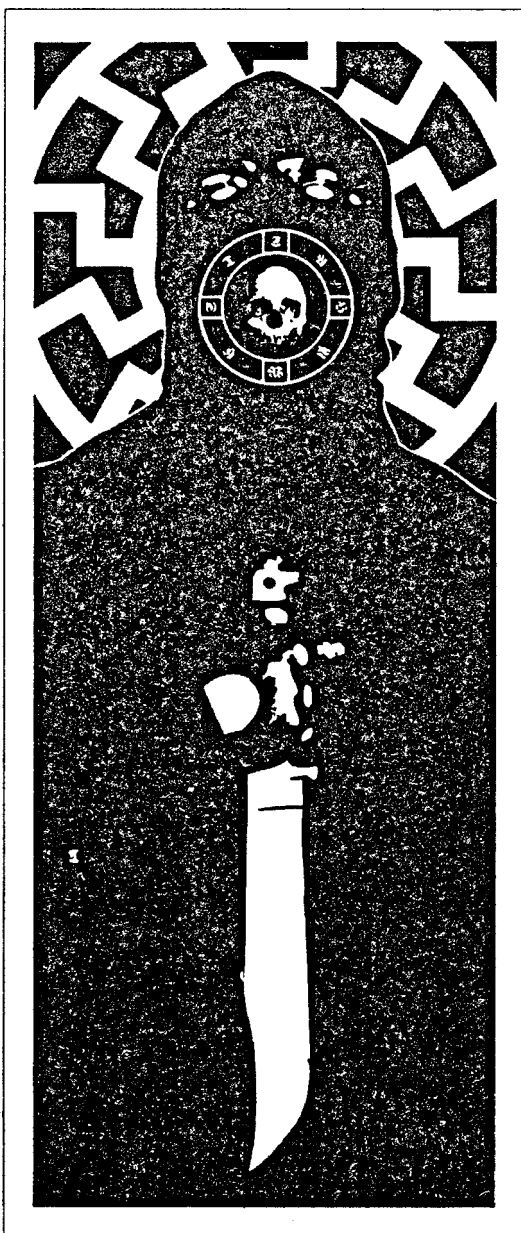
*«Symbolism is powerful. The most simple symbol can also be the most powerful. I created the Deathangle as the symbol of Satanic skinhead superiority. It is a triangle encapsulating a skull signifying death, darkness, evil and pain. [...] The swastika can be interpreted in many different ways by many different people. There are buddhists who have the symbol tattooed on*

*their bodies as they think that it signifies peace, as they follow one ancient view of the symbol. The DEATHANGLE can NEVER be interpreted any other way than it was created»<sup>10</sup>.*

Kramer's battle against humanity proceeds unabated; sometimes his destructive work rises to the surface like an underground river, strengthened by a new sound invective produced by his black forges. The rabid isolation that characterizes his trademark does not seem to bother him at all.

Although Satanic Skinhead Propaganda invokes a global race war, and a real, all-round genocide, its unholy fondness for Judaism, seen as the primary enemy, remains indisputable. When asked about this controversial anti-Semitic position, Kramer prefers to rely on the supporting axioms of his personal, as well as cryptic, worldview.

*«Once the pyramid is revealed, and the enslavers are exposed, it will make sense. Their bloodline is in control within this dimension. [...] I do whatever is necessary to stay out of the Zionist paradigm set to enslave the manipulated controlled sheople scum. I am an enemy of this world and all who fall under its spell, whether they are waving swastika or star of David flags. Unless someone is truly awake to REALITY, they are my enemy»<sup>11</sup>.*



On February 12, 2013, a press release by Antichrist Kramer announced a new phase for his recording career. Claiming a state of constant monitoring and unprecedented investigative pressures from the U.S. intelligence services, both Satanic Skinhead Propaganda and its sister label Audial Decimation Records were declared dead and simultaneously

merged in a new creation called Deathangle Absolution Records. The last three works released as Satanic Skinhead Propaganda were the 10" by The True Werwolf, *Vampyric Magick*, and the reissues on 12" of Spear of Longinus (*Nazi Occult Metal*) and Vaginal Jesus (*Affirmative Apartheid*).

The year 2013 witnessed a gradual transmigration of contacts and references to Satanic Skinhead Propaganda towards the newborn Deathangle Absolution Records, although - from the very first moment - the cumbersome shadow of the original label would be undeniable. It is not hard to see that, for all the early followers, Kramer's work remains (and will remain) inextricably linked to the sacredness of Satanic Skinhead Propaganda.

## Notes:

- 1 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, from Gallery of the Grotesque n.5, autumn 2009.
- 2 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, from Currents n.5, 2006.
- 3 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, interview with the authors, May 2012.
- 4 - The acronym stands for *Fuck Off Melodic Black Metal*. It is the title of a song off the EP *Crust* by the black/thrash Brazilian band Sarcófago.
- 5 - Kramer, from Satanic Skinhead - Crush the Weak n.3, 2004.
- 6 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, from Currents n.5, 2006.
- 7 - Just think of Kramer's label's official website, which for years - until it was drastically revamped between 2011 and 2012 - boasted the sentence: «*Satanic Skinhead Propaganda has no affiliation with zionist run, information collecting, "social network" sites and never will - Die Juden sind unser Unglück!* ("The Jews are our downfall")».
- 8 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, interview with the authors, May 2012.
- 9 - Kramer took care of several pieces of artwork within the black metal scene and similar genres. Ink, pencils and acrylics put to the service of album covers for Nyogthaeblisz, Pseudogod, Vasaeleth, Der Stürmer, Absurd, ecc.
- 10 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, from Currents n.5, 2006.
- 11 - Satanic Skinhead Propaganda, interview with the authors, May 2012.



# After the deluge...

## Conclusions

«WARRIORS... COME OUT TO PLAY-I-EY!»<sup>1</sup>

[THE WARRIORS]

**A**t this point, it is time to focus on the big picture and, at the same time, give meaning to the path we have embarked on through the hundreds of pages of this book.

All in all, we have seen that it is not easy to restrict the NSBM phenomenon within fixed limitations, and that the definition of this music genre is too often applied in a superficial, if not "creative" or instrumental manner. If we used what Hendrik Möbus said during our interview as a discriminating factor, that a if a band wants to be considered NSBM it must first define itself as such, we would be led to conclude that the scene consists of nothing more than a tiny handful of bands faithfully devoted to the ideal, who are kept at a safe distance even within the metal scene.

In truth, around this core of loyalists, we were able to outline the jagged boundaries of a rather big galaxy, dotted with bands that take inspiration - in a more or less veiled manner, and with different goals and means - from a similar philosophical background which, without lingering in the fierce aesthetics of National Socialism, still sinks its roots in the cultural background in which Hitler's political doctrine has proliferated. To summarize, we can say that within the rigid framework of this acronym, the elusive and highly liquid traits of different realities exist and subsist, and their only constant can be identified in dissidence.

However, this is an intrinsic quality of the underground taken as a whole, and it is manifested by different degrees of intensity (not to say violence) according to the themes implemented by the individuals. In trying to synthesize the primal urge of this scene, we can borrow a phrase we have stumbled upon during our research, scrolling through the countless (and inexhaustible) debates on NSBM within the metal communities around the globe: «*black metal can be anything but politically correct*»<sup>2</sup>.

While at first glance this might sound like a harmless outburst, not too witty or articulate, it perfectly frames the matter in its simplicity, and captures the most important aspect of a movement that was originated, consciously or not, by a set of reactive forces that placed an unprecedented form of brutal ideological extremism, to the sound of metal.

Music, thanks to its particular disposition to aggregate, presents itself as the most functional medium to spread the word that is at the basis of the movement, because it is capable of conveying not only sounds, but also aesthetics and ideas. A perfect tool of propaganda and, in absolute terms, among the most effective, if properly circulated among young people, as they are particularly sensitive and receptive to the subversive and "elitist" call that is linked to the phenomenon. Once the form was chosen, which is relevant to the DNA of the scene itself, the sound was accompanied by a conceptual foundation, and an ideological background which, although largely controversial and contradictory, defines the essence of the genre. For this reason, the numerous stylistic licenses that go beyond typical black metal, as well as the countless diversions towards other musical directions (death, thrash, or RAC, hatecore and industrial) do not affect the affiliation of a band that has decided to join the community of National Socialist black metal.

In other words, although black metal dominance still persists in NSBM - and rightly so -, any changes of course of the individual do not affect the affiliation to the pack, which is indeed continuously searching for activists and certainly will not criticize the guitar's degree of distortion. This is also one of the many reasons why NSBM still enjoys good health to this day, although it could be argued that the golden season of the genre is to be found in the Nineties, when the inevitable decline/mass production of black metal determined the explosion of Nazi-tinged metal.

In fact, during the scenario of the time, it was NSBM that restored the aura of "danger" which was supposed to be the pillar of black metal. It is undeniable that its concentration of anti-modern heresies has maintained the important features of the first, famous Norwegian wave, while altering the now obsolete thematic approach: where Satan once made the communities tremble, there has been a sort of passing of the baton at the hands of the new generation that, in accordance with the same stylistic direction, has chosen to replace the pentacle with the swastika and the devil with the Führer. This transient process, when viewed and analyzed with due detachment, becomes legitimized and almost natural. After all, once the Luciferian bogeyman wore out, what other taboos could black metal have addressed?

The process of consolidation that followed was somewhat surprising. For obvious reasons, media overexposure was avoided, and the genre managed to stay dangerously afloat while avoiding the suffering that often hits currents that are perpetually relegated to the underground. Rather than dying, it has proliferated, regenerating time after time, while reinforcing an organizational network that is the backbone of the new wave of National Socialist metal.

The generational changes that followed did nothing but broaden the spectrum of influences (musical and thematic), without imparting drastic changes to the route already mapped out. Leaving aside some watered-down esotericism, the message was made sharper and more focused, supported by a cultural background that now overlooks the official historiography, preferring to throw itself headlong among the great



mystics of magical Nazism or the theorists of Jewish conspiracy. In NSBM, comparisons with historical facts or recourse to a debate in a search for truth is not central, but rather the construction of a different reality, a kind of parallel dimension based on ideals and concepts chewed out in the form of new fringe philosophies. The result is a body of ideas that opposes everything society has to offer - a situation similar to that of black metal, except the latter became more compliant with the surrounding world long ago.

Instead, NSBM is the outpost that has not surrendered the weapons, which - as a last resort - has decided to adopt the stigma of the swastika (sometimes due to real belief, and sometimes for its uncomfortable rather than political significance): a radical decision that guarantees a place at the margins of the music system. Aware of not having access to any sort of economic gratification, this choice is an incentive to fight and, at the same time, a mark that is impossible to escape from. Setting aside any dreams of glory and throwing itself headlong into the fray, ideally speaking, NSBM has taken one step further compared to its progenitor, adding a new vision to the nihilist fury that we could define, from these groups' perspective, as "constructive".

As usual, reality proves to be much less organized than what the propaganda makes us believe. The high-sounding proclamations launched through records or fanzines often clash mercilessly with the actual facts: internal divisions, imprisonments, defections and, ultimately, a large group of fans who are often more prone to the organized chaos of live concerts that include an excessive intake of alcohol, rather than to the disciplined search for a life to be lived according to the dictates of the Nietzschean superman.

In the end, the gap between the theoretical aspect of NSBM and pragmatic everyday reality appears unbridgeable. It is difficult to find a consensus view for even the main concerns the ideas promote, and the dissident and unruly aura of the genre constantly re-emerges in the various currents that animate it. Wanting to overlook the differences between openly neo-Nazi bands and those that are only interested in the esoteric substrate, we find that very different ideas coexist within the phenomenon, regarding nearly every political and social issue: such as those who are against Islam and those who see it as an ally against the governments manipulated by the Jewish lobbies; those in favor of national unity and those who see nationalism as a cancer of Christian derivation that weakens the "blood ties" of the Aryan race. These conflicts go on and on, in a forest of theories and stances that could hardly join forces when put to the test. Not to mention the multifaceted milieu of racist/supremacist/separatist groups whose ideas and slogans frequently recur on the records of numerous bands, forming an additional and fragmented universe.

Despite these internal divisions and the lack of an organic and organized scene, the phenomenon is perceived with growing concern. The substantial freedom of action guaranteed by acting covertly (both in terms of propagandistic excesses and sounds) has created an underground oasis that, like a Karstic river, occasionally bursts

close to the mainstream. When this happens, it triggers the alarms of the community which keeps on failing to explain the stubborn resistance of a music genre that is considered a virus. This disease was believed to have been eradicated years ago, like an evil buried by oblivion, but has been revived again, in the form of an incredibly resistant and stubborn strain and with the aggravating circumstance of a particularly pernicious ideological contamination.

With changing fortunes, and still waiting for affirmation on a large scale, which is made impossible by its very essence, National Socialist black metal is, nonetheless, destined to survive. In a nutshell, its strength goes hand in hand with its being inadmissible in the conventional music scene: if on one hand, the NSBM bands find themselves cut off because they are seen as uncomfortable and unacceptable regardless of the actual quality of the material they offer, on the other hand, this aspect gives the phenomenon a halo between the mystical and the elitist, a coat of arms of true uncompromising underground which is the only presentable certificate to assert its credentials as an opponent of the system, and claim credit within the scene.

Wanting to outline the concept, it is inevitable to come to a conclusion: NSBM is a subset of black metal, it inherits almost every functional/musical aspect and largely contains the same aesthetic inclinations (paganism, wildlife, icy atmospheres, and the romantic vision of their land, are all traits common to both black metal and its National Socialist progeny). Although open to other influences, it remains with its feet firmly planted in the music and attitude taught in the first Scandinavian black wave.

Before the fans or the journalists had an inkling, the bands themselves understood it. Even in the face of conceptual distances between those who remained devoted to a fierce satanic predilection and those who chose to gather under a no longer inverted but rather crooked cross, there was no holding back on transversal collaborations between these not so distant universes. What formed was rather contiguous with large overlapping areas. NSBM might be regarded as the neglected child of black metal, it might follow a path that gradually removes it from the genre which it comes from, but it will however irreparably remain an integral part of that enormous macro-set that includes bands ranging from Cradle of Filth to Darkthrone, from Nokturnal Mortum to the South American Nazi bands.

The aspect connected to the involvement between NSBM and some (mind you, some, certainly not all, or even most) among the many organizations within the current subversive neo-Nazi scene is a collateral element at most. After all, we are still talking about the underground, and therefore, a rather small group of militants that are too few and scattered, with incoherent stances. Although the actions of some of these "metallized" political activists have had some impact on society, in the end, there is nothing that can really foretell the imminent advent of a black horde on large scale, that could turn the clock back to the past century.

As already explained at the beginning of this book, NSBM is and remains synonymous with war, and this is both its limit and its *raison d'être*. Only the future will

tell whether this conflict might come to the point of actually distressing the status quo or it will simply turn out to be a quixotic fight against windmills.

### Notes:

1 - From the movie *The Warriors*, 1979.

2 - Excerpt from a statement by Hendrik Möbus regarding the NSBM scene on the Nuclear War Now forum (<http://nwnprod.com/forum>).

# NSBM kommando



# Glossary

**ANTIFA:** Short for Antifaschistische Aktion ("Antifascist action"), generally indicates the Communist and Anarchist organizations that fight against Nazi-Fascism.

**B&H:** Blood & Honour. Neo-Nazi network for music promotion.

**C18:** Combat 18, neo-Nazi movement originated in the United Kingdom and affiliated to Blood & Honour.

**NSBM:** National Socialist Black Metal.

**NSDAP:** Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei ("National Socialist German Workers' Party").

**RAC:** Rock Against Communism. Acronym coined in Britain in the late Seventies which identified the organization of musical events sponsored by the English extreme Right scene. Later, the same term has defined a genre that borrowed a lot from the skinhead scene.

**RAHOWA:** Racial Holy War. Motto in the form of an acronym which refers to the work of Ben Klassen (1918-1993), the white separatist of Ukrainian origin known for founding and being the first Pontifex Maximus of the Church of the Creator.

**W.A.R.:** White Aryan Resistance.

**W.O.T.A.N.:** Will of the Aryan Nation.

## Alphanumeric codes:

**14:** The "Fourteen Words", coined by the white separatist David Eden Lane (1938-2007), among the founding members of the terrorist group that was active in the early Eighties called The Order: *«We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children»*.

**18:** The two numbers refer to the corresponding letters of the alphabet, "A" and "H", the initials of Adolf Hitler.

**28:** As above, but the reference is to the international neo-Nazi network for the promotion of the skinhead scene called Blood & Honour.

**88:** The eighth letter of the alphabet repeated twice: "HH" ie. *«Heil Hitler!»*.



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Notes:





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